Memorial

ALFRED MASON WILLIAMS

Journal of the
Senate of Virginia Journal
1800.

Kentucky Journal

West Va.

Indiana

FROM

BENJ. B. EDMANDS,

PROVIDENCE, R. I.

TRUSTEE ESTATE OF A. M. WILLIAMS.

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Memorial

of

Alfred Mason Williams

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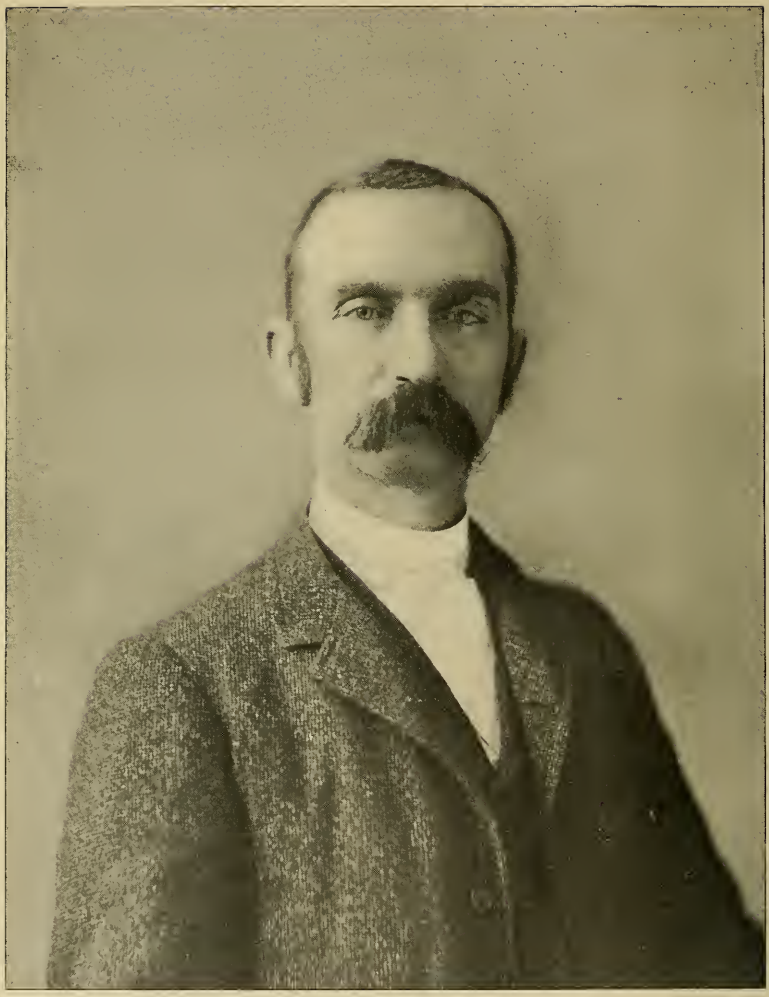

ALFRED M. WILLIAMS.

Memorial

OF

ALFRED MASON WILLIAMS

BORN OCTOBER 23, 1840

DIED MARCH 9, 1896

For His Friends

1898

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We have most gratefully to acknowledge the kindness of Mr. Howland, whose labor of love appears in the very appreciative life sketch. We also thankfully acknowledge the kindness of the Providence Journal Company for the privilege of printing these letters of Mr. Williams and the verses of M. M. T. which first appeared in their columns.

ALFRED M. WILLIAMS.

Is this the end—a lamp blown out forever ?
That matchless memory, wit and wisdom fled ?
That wondrous mind, that heart of high endeavor—
Are all these things as naught, now he is dead ?

Yet 'tis the kindly heart we most are mourning,
The helping hand that ever beckoned higher,
The lofty soul, the low pretensions scorning,
The voice that bade to nobler deeds aspire.

No faithful friend a farewell uttered o'er him.
Was this an end befitting such as he ?
Was it to this poor goal his journeys bore him,
A lonely island in a distant sea ?

Yet as in death, in life so walked he lonely,
Drew with infrequent hand the veil apart
And showed where sorrow sat with the silent
And inner sanctuary of his heart.

From words of bard and sage he fain would borrow
Balm for the wounds of unforgetting pain—
The pen his shield from all-intrusive sorrow,
So should his loss become another's gain.

Could he but tell to us this one last story,
That lonely journey to the unknown land !
Was it through paths of pain, or gates of glory ?
Alas, the idle pen, the quiet hand !

Somewhere doth genial fellowship await him,
Bard, poet, wit and scholar gone before,
A goodly company, shall stand to greet him,
In hearty welcome on the untrod shore.

What matters it that far across the ocean
The hands of strangers laid him down to rest ?
The sea-waves chant his dirge with ceaseless motion,
And wild birds sing above his quiet breast ?

Far forth in space shall his free soul be straying,
With those he loved and lost long years ago,
And in deep draughts of peace his heart-thirst staying,
Shall find the joy that he had missed below.

M. M. T.

ALFRED M. WILLIAMS.

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

BY RICHARD S. HOWLAND.

Alfred Mason Williams was born on a farm near Taunton, October 23d, in the year 1840. He came of one of the best known New England families, and inherited that dogged determination of his ancestors which enabled them and him to overcome such obstacles in their path as would have caused fainter hearts to turn aside. The soil about Taunton is not a kindly one. Those who wring an existence from its barrenness must work early and late and be satisfied with meagre returns. This struggle with nature is not a hopeless one, however, and it develops a hardy man who can easily hold his own against those growing up in more luxurious surroundings. In the 40's and 50's the public school system of Massachusetts had not attained a very wide development. Even then it was good enough, however, to

furnish every scholar with the rudiments of learning. Young Williams was able to supplement his early studies by a few terms at the Bristol Academy, an institution perfectly competent to fit young men for any of the New England colleges. In 1886, when the farmer's boy was 16 years old, he entered Brown University. That he could spare the time to prepare himself at this age, and that he had the ambition to obtain the best education within the reach of anyone, showed that his native farm afforded its tillers much more than food and clothing.

He was only able to remain two years in the Rhode Island college. At the end of that time an inherent weakness of his eyes began to show itself, and by his physician's advice he was obliged to give up the life of a student, which he so much preferred, and return to agricultural pursuits. The university was amply satisfied a few years later that he had made up the prescribed studies of his course, and gave him the full degree. Although the doctor had forbidden him to use his eyes in reading, to the extent demanded by a college course, he was able during the next four years of outdoor labor to find many hours of leisure in which he could avail himself of the goodly supply of books to be found in any Massachusetts community of the size of Taunton. His education had been carried beyond the average when he left Brown, and he knew perfectly well how to distinguish between

solid literature and ephemeral trash. It cannot be said that in these four years he had laid up as good a stock of knowledge as he might have done by continuing his college course, but probably his acquaintance with English literature was much wider at the end of this time than that of any of his former classmates.

When the war of the rebellion broke out, our farmer was busy enough with his routine work on the farm and his books, but for a young man of 22 at such stirring times it was natural enough that he should heed the call of his country and enter the army. He enlisted as private, in the spring of 1862, in the Fourth Regiment of Massachusetts Volunteers, for a nine months' term of service. Before he was discharged from the army, at the expiration of his time, it was his destiny to go through one of the severest campaigns of the entire war. Little did any one expect when these raw recruits from southeastern Massachusetts were mustered-in, armed, and equipped at Readville, that they were to go through an experience which would have tried the discipline of the most seasoned veterans, or be called upon to face with undaunted courage, suffering and death in every form. The regiment was taken on board transports in New York to proceed to New Orleans, where they were to join the great army gathering to take possession of the lower portion of the Mississippi river.

The voyage to the Crescent City occupied six weeks, and was ever memorable to the men who enjoyed the delightful trip. There was plenty of room on the vessel, good food and fine weather. This was Mr. Williams' first experience on the ocean, and he ever remembered it with gratitude. He always knew from this time forward where he could best find repose, and many voyages were undertaken by him afterwards for this express purpose.

Promptly on arrival at New Orleans, the regiment was marched off to join the forces moving on Port Hudson. The object of the campaign was to help General Grant free the Mississippi from all obstructions, and thus cut the Confederate States in two. At first the regiment was employed in minor expeditions until the commanding general began to collect his forces at Brasher, in the latter part of February.

Here many delays occurred, and it was the 10th of April before General Banks began to move. He had altogether some 30,000 men scattered about his department, but half of them were volunteers, like the Fourth Massachusetts, whose terms of enlistment would soon expire. He marched against the Confederates with nearly 15,000 men, and, with the help of the gunboats, was entirely successful in driving the rebels from one position after another, until, on the 6th of May, he captured Alexandria. The Confederates lost 2,000 men and 20 pieces of artillery in

this brief campaign, and retreated as fast as possible to Shreveport. A week later Banks left Alexandria for Port Hudson, and soon invested that stronghold. Deceived by false reports of the weakness of the Confederates, he made a disastrous assault on the place on the 27th of May. For ten hours the Union forces struggled bravely against the earthworks of the enemy. Occasionally they would gain the parapet only to be beaten back with dreadful losses. Close by the Massachusetts men the two colored regiments fought, and won the admiration of all who watched them by their persistent courage. It was a revelation to the white soldiers as well as to the whole north that these blacks could die so bravely. At the end of the day Banks sounded the recall and asked for a truce, to bury three hundred dead and take fifteen hundred wounded to the rear. Mr. Williams was in the thick of this fighting but, was not hurt, although his company lost its captain and more than its share of killed and wounded. Then for two weeks the army worked, digging trenches and constructing earthworks. The heat was intense, and malarial fever claimed nearly half the force. On the 11th of June Banks decided that he must make another assault or lose his entire army by sickness in the trenches. This second attempt failed rather less disastrously than the first, as far as losses in killed and wounded went, but it cost the enfeebled

forces 750 men and left the besiegers in a forlorn condition. If the rebels had been able to make a vigorous sally, or if any reinforcements could have been sent to them, the complete destruction of the Union army would have resulted. General Grant was, however, so well satisfied with the situation that he urged Banks to send him two or three regiments to assist in the capture of Vicksburg. This was not possible. It was all the latter could do to keep a force in his trenches sufficient to remind the rebels that it would be impossible for them to march out without danger. For the next three weeks there was only desultory fighting kept up. Men would crawl out of bed, in the intervals of their malarial fever, to fire a few shots at the enemy before the chills came on again so severely that they could not hold a musket. It was the same story of the unconquerable pluck of the volunteer soldiers of the North overcoming the resistance of the South and atoning for the blunders of generals ignorant of the art of war. It was during this period that Mr. Williams found time to write letters to the New York *Tribune* and other newspapers. Then he found that he could describe the scenes about him in a graphic manner, and that the success of his letters was the opening of his life's career to him. He never faltered in his determination to make journalism his profession when he saw that he could write in such a way that

people would enjoy his pen pictures. The scenes about him were well calculated to awaken his capacities. He was watching others suffering from wounds and disease while himself almost a physical wreck from the inroads of the fever. Under the circumstances it seemed almost impossible to fill out many pages, even with so much material lying about him, but he made the great effort necessary, and was repaid a hundredfold in after life for this exhibition of his pluck. So the long, hot days of June dragged on, accompanied by the intense heat of a Louisiana summer. There was constant skirmishing with the enemy, with the resultant casualties. The hospitals were filling up rapidly as the ranks were depleted. Miasmas steamed up from the newly dug trenches, rendering any escape from the fever germs impossible. The strongest constitutions succumbed to the contagion, and it might be truly said that there was not a man left in the Fourth Massachusetts who was capable of doing an ordinary day's work. In addition to this their time of enlistment had then expired, and they were kept at the front simply because it was physically impossible to get them away. As the weeks dragged by, however, it was just as bad, or worse, for the small army of rebels defending the stronghold. They were hoping for relief which never came; they were rapidly using up their stores, and the ravages of disease were just as virulent with

them as with their foes. Altogether it was a situation appealing to the imagination of one capable of describing it in graphic terms. The story was often told in after years with many variations, from different standpoints, but there was no witness on the spot who ever portrayed it in clearer colors.

One morning, early in July, a great cheering broke out in the trenches of the Union men, where all had been so cheerless for so many weeks. At first the rebels supposed that reinforcements had arrived and that the final assault would begin. Soon, however, a flag of truce appeared, and the rebel general was informed that Pemberton had surrendered to Grant at Vicksburg. General Banks asked his brave opponent to give up the now useless struggle, and spare any further sacrifice of lives on each side. After much parleying this was finally agreed upon, and the last obstruction to the free navigation of the great river from St. Louis to the sea was removed. The campaign was now over, and the Fourth Massachusetts was at once relieved from further service. It was transported by steamer up the river and reached home in August, presenting a sad spectacle of weary and broken down men. Few of the soldiers were able to re-enlist, while young Williams required several months of rest before he could resume labor at any avocation.

As soon as he was able to be about again, he sought

and obtained a position on the Taunton *Gazette*, beginning at the bottom of the ladder and steadily working his way up through every position on the paper. Journalism, as then existing in the smaller cities of New England, did not hold out very strong financial inducements to its reporters or editors, but it did give this young man a livelihood, and also afforded him the practice he desired in the use of his pen. He was often called upon to write up the robbery of a hen roost, or a vehicular catastrophe caused by the breaking of an antiquated harness, but he was not denied the privilege of writing serious editorial paragraphs or taking part in the discussion of important local topics. Whatever his assignment, he was interested in doing well the work before him, and believed that better opportunities would soon be presented. Two years passed before the chance he longed for was sent his way, but when it did come it was more than he could have anticipated in his most ambitious dreams.

Horace Greely, the editor of the New York *Tribune*, had come out of the civil war with perhaps as high a reputation as anyone who had not been immediately connected with its operations in an official capacity. He thought himself, therefore, fully justified in aspiring to the presidency, and, being practically certain that he could not obtain the Republican nomination, he turned his attention toward making himself solid

with the Irish voters of New York. Fenianism was then attracting much attention, and while the veteran journalist was not in the least deceived by the hopelessness of the effort on the part of the Irish to throw off the rule of England, he thought it would be a good stroke of policy to send a special correspondent across the water to write up the actual condition of affairs in the Emerald Isle. Remembering the good work of the young soldier from Taunton in the recent war, he made him an offer, which was eagerly accepted, and early in October, 1865, Mr. Williams set sail for Cork. Fortune was most kind to him in instigating the over zealous police at Queenstown to arrest him as soon as he landed, on account of his smart military bearing and the discovery of a revolver in his valise. It was brought out at the preliminary hearing that the authorities had been warned that officers of the American army were hastening to Ireland in small groups and singly, for the purpose of taking command of the insurrectionists. The case against the war correspondent was so clear that he was at once sent to jail, and there languished for seven days. He was then released with a martyr's crown upon his brow guaranteeing him a warm reception wherever he went among the people. His first letter to the *Tribune* was dated November 1st, and was followed at frequent intervals by contributions to the Boston *Journal*, *Post*, *Pilot*, *Saturday Press* and Taunton *Gazette*. He

remained two weeks in Cork, which he described in detail, visiting the poorest quarters, and bringing out the want and misery of the wretched inhabitants. From there he proceeded to Tipperary, next to Waterford, Upper Kilmac, Glenmore, Kilkenny, and reached Dublin by the middle of December. From the capital he made trips to different points of interest all over the island. His last letter was dated the 19th of January, and he reached Taunton on his return by the 9th of February. He had thus enjoyed fully three months of travel in this most distressful country, and accumulated a store of material which proved of the greatest value to him in all his after life. He wrote twenty long letters in that time, which are preserved in his scrap book, and refers in a note to two others. He pretty thoroughly plucked the heart out of Fenianism, and well revealed the hopelessness of any insurrection against the overwhelming power of England. The misery of the peasantry won his warmest sympathy, and caused him to rebuke in no mincing language the tyranny of the "foreigners" who seemed to take delight in inflicting needless sufferings upon a downtrodden race. It was a great change from chronicling the daily events in a small community like Taunton to be investigating the condition of the unhappy Celts who occupied the soil of Ireland, but it was not too great a labor for Mr. Williams' active mind. He mixed with every class

of the people, and studied his subject thoroughly, until he was able to make a report which has stood the test of time. He found that the emigration of the peasantry would prove to be the true relief for the crowded condition of the labor market, and that the land would be largely turned into pasture ground for cattle. In later years, when Mr. Gladstone staked and lost his power on his Home Rule measure, no one in this country better understood the merits and demerits of that agitation than Mr. Williams. It was here also that the study of folk lore was begun and the foundation of two books laid. Mr. Williams found the direct descendants of the old bards travelling about from one village to another, earning a scant livelihood by crude renderings of songs and ballads. It occurred to him at once that by collecting these recitations, and comparing them with the earlier poems of the country, he could trace the changes which had been wrought by the successive generations. This is the science of folk lore as since developed, and its pursuit has attracted the attention of many of the brightest litterateurs. Mr. Williams was fortunate in having two opportunities subsequently to become somewhat acquainted with the myths of the red Indians of the west, and with those of the negroes of the Antilles. His enthusiasm in the pursuit of this knowledge finally cost him his life. He often declared, and those who knew him

best recognized the fact, that his talent lay in the studies of places and peoples, and not in the controversies of editorial work. Had he possessed private means at thirty, such as came to him at fifty, he would have turned his entire thought to just such work as he was engaged in during those three happy months passed in Ireland. His social studies of the poor all over the world would have been a noteworthy contribution to literature, had he ever been given more extended opportunities to make them. He never could forget that "he was perched above such a crowded swarm of poverty and misery, hunger, and disease, as is packed in noisome hives like a death's head beneath a grinning mask." He several times took occasion afterwards to visit the slums of Boston and New York and compare them with those in Ireland, but he never saw the wretchedness of Cork and Dublin equalled or even approached in any American city. The heart of this country was then very bitter toward the English, who had "adored Jeff. Davis," and this feeling is well reflected in these Irish letters. He did not hesitate to attribute nine-tenths of the woes of the people to British misrule. In one place he declares that "none but the veriest churl of an Englishman could refuse to interchange greetings with this warm hearted people, whose blessings are cheap, and curses given away—the gift of a half-penny or its refusal will procure an unlimited

supply of either, and of the best quality without distinction of price." Even the English themselves are at last beginning to understand that they have blundered for generations in withholding kindly consideration from a brilliant if misguided race, which has been placed under their rule. It would have well repaid one of the great London dailies if they had made Mr. Williams their permanent correspondent at the cities of Ireland. Even the New York *Tribune* might profitably have kept on with these letters, although they had fulfilled the purpose of the editor and shown his readers that the Irish deserved a full measure of sympathy and the English an unstinted quota of condemnation. It was twenty years before Mr. Williams was able to revisit this field of his labors, and then his comparisons were cut short by a severe illness preventing him from noting as he had purposed the alleviations of more humane methods.

When the war correspondent returned to Taunton he immediately resumed his work on the *Gazette*, but with a far different outlook. He had made a reputation for himself in both Boston and New York, and found abundant opportunity to keep his pen busy. He also put some of the interesting material he had collected concerning the literature and conditions of Ireland into shape for lectures, and delivered a number on various occasions. Four years quickly passed in these avocations, while their interest was consid-

erably increased by two winters spent in Boston as a member of the Massachusetts legislature. This was the only political office he ever held. He was re-elected to his second term by the entire constituency, regardless of party lines, receiving 1,664 votes, while the other candidates elected had only 931 ballots cast in their favor. While in the legislature he became an ardent advocate of the cause of woman suffrage, and opened the great debate which took place April 20th, 1870. He stated that he believed the women of the commonwealth were competent to take an active part in the affairs of the country; that politics would be purer and men and women better and wiser if the latter were allowed to exercise the right of suffrage. The vote which followed resulted in a defeat of the measure by a vote of 68 yeas to 133 nays. Mr. Williams was very much in earnest at the time in favor of the introduction of this novel element into political life, but he did not take the defeat of his favorite measure too seriously, and never resumed his advocacy of the reform. He had every opportunity to continue as an active politician in his native State, and was offered the nomination for the upper branch of the legislature, but his attention was now turned to other more important personal matters. He had married a wife, and, therefore, could not pay too much attention to such trifles as the enfranchisement of the sex in general. He recognized that one

member of that sex in particular had now the first call upon his energies, and he cast about for some practical method of increasing his income. He had taken to heart some years before the advice of his patron saint in journalism, Horace Greely, to go West as soon as he could and grow up with the country. An opportunity had not yet come to him, but in the autumn of this year he was offered, at a reasonable price, the ownership of a little newspaper called the *Investigator*, in the flourishing town of Neosho, which lies in the southwestern corner of Missouri on the line of the Pacific railroad, and then contained some 2,000 inhabitants. He soon closed the bargain, and, packing up his few household goods, started toward the setting sun on the 24th of November. He was given a most friendly send off by his friends in the profession around Taunton, and was welcomed by the Missourians with much heartiness and hospitality.

The young couple soon found that they had made no mistake in setting up for themselves on the prairies of the West. The awkward name of "*Investigator*" was soon changed to that of "*Journal.*" New presses, type and other supplies were purchased, and it became evident that a new force had appeared in the community. Within a month editorials began to appear regularly on Indian affairs, to the great surprise of a large number of the sub-

CEMETERY, BASSE TERRE,—ST. KITTS.

scribers who had not been wont to feel much sympathy for the red-skins in the territory just across their border. The tribes were about beginning another agitation for some form of territorial organization, and the more intelligent among the chiefs eagerly welcomed the assistance offered them by the Yankee editor. Wm. P. Ross, the chief of the Cherokees, was particularly attracted by the kind interest of the new editor, and a warm personal friendship sprang up between the two which only ended with the death of the chief some years later. There was an abundance of topics to be discussed in the community in which Mr. Williams had cast his lot, but none of them awakened in him such a keen interest as the Indian question. He made many visits to the settlement of the Indians, attended many of their councils, and wrote much about them to the Eastern newspapers. He was as much at home among these semi-civilized savages as he had been among the inhabitants of the Irish bogs and fens. Here was another downtrodden race suffering cruel wrongs from those whose superior firearms and military organization had conquered the lands belonging to their ancestors. The result of his observations (to use his own language) convinced him that the Indian of the Appalachian tribe, at least, was capable of civilization. "The Cherokees have made great progress and the change is not altogether in blood, although

that is to a large extent the mark and sign of progress, so that it may be said that the nation will be thoroughly civilized when it is white to all intents and purposes. In a few generations this will be accomplished and white will be the larger element."

This view of the Indian question was confirmed in his mind by subsequent study, and he stoutly maintained that the problem would be solved only by protecting the aborigines from the greed of the Caucasian race until intermarriage had produced a new people capable of taking on the semblance of civilization. The squaws were finding that white husbands treat them better than those of their own tribes, and, therefore, they were seeking marriage with the pale faces. This is the natural process of absorption, as old as the time of the rape of the Sabine women, and anyone who has been about among the Indians knows how rapidly the half breeds are taking the place of the original types. Mr. Williams pleaded for preservation of all the treaty rights of the tribes in the territory, and "for the preservation of the honor of the United States solemnly pledged to the Indians." By special invitation he attended the Grand Council of all the tribes held at Okmulgee, where he saw more specimens of the different tribes than were ever before collected together in any one place. He carefully noted the characteristics of each one, and spent

several days visiting their different encampments. He found remnants of some once famous tribes and large numbers of others not so well known. Some were dressed in civilized garments and were hardly to be distinguished from ordinary American citizens. Others were adorned by the original paint and feathers of the savage. There were Cherokees, Creeks, Choctaws, Sacs, Foxes, Kiowas, Cheyennes, Comanches, Arapahoes, Osages, Apaches, Wacos, Caddos, Modocs, Pawnees, Wichitas, Towacconies. Of the tribes formerly inhabiting the eastern part of the country there were still many striking representatives, such as the Senecas, Delawares and Seminoles. Some of the still powerful Sioux were there, while the government was very busy with their brothers farther north, where they were yet to show their courage in fierce battles with the United States army. It was a great opportunity to observe and describe the last of the former possessors of this continent, and it was well improved. Mr. Williams employed much time during the four years before this in fully qualifying himself to write at length on this subject, and toward the last he took many occasions to impress his views upon as large an audience as he could reach through eastern as well as western journals. If he could have resided permanently at Neosho, he would have become a recognized authority on this important matter, and no doubt could have

done much to alleviate the wrongs and sufferings of the wards of the nation. He did what he could subsequently in Providence, however, and heartily supported the efforts of the Indian Rights Association in every possible way.

There was no lack of stir and activity in the life of an industrious newspaper man in the southwest. He was running an aggressive Republican journal in a Democratic community, and was very active in politics. He came very near being elected to the Missouri legislature by the acquiescence of a large number of his opponents, who refused to vote against him. He was a member of the Congressional committee in his district, and was recognized by the St. Louis papers as a rising light on the horizon. In 1872 he felt obliged to vigorously oppose the election of Horace Greely to the presidency, and penned many sharp editorials to show why it would not be safe to trust the Democrats with power, even under such a leader. After the campaign was over he was called upon to perform the sad duty of writing an obituary of his friend, in which he poured out deserved and unstinted praise for the great man who had moulded public opinion in the North for so many years and always guided it toward truth and humanity. Mr. Williams never let partisan bitterness rankle in his bosom. After elections he claimed that the fight was over, and all should be good

friends until a few days before the next contest. There was an entire lack of solemnity in his attacks on his foes, and he was always, like an Irishman, going into a scrimmage just for the excitement of the thing.

It must have surprised the readers of a little country newspaper, published in a small border town, to have had so many topics of world-wide interest discussed with such ability in its editorial columns. Here was a man who did not hesitate to tell a community, which looked with slight criticism on the operations of the notorious James gang, that only barbarians supported bandits, and that there could be no progress in their country until such lawlessness was put down with an iron hand. He did not hesitate to personally join the sheriff's posse, and hunt outlaws at the risk of his life. There was no quarter given on either side when the representatives of order met the desperadoes. They never brought in a prisoner, but left several lonely graves on the prairie. There were not so many of these incidents, however, in the course of the year, as to interfere at all with such peaceful avocations as writing poetry and delivering lectures on historical and literary topics, for the benefit of various churches and lyceums. At the time of the Virginius affair he earnestly advocated the annexation of Cuba, and gave most cogent reasons for such a course. If the sentiment

of the country could only have crystallized sufficiently to have enabled President Grant to have accomplish this achievement, hundreds of thousands of lives would have been saved and tens of millions of dollars. He said then "the best citizens of Cuba desire annexation. Spain has no title to be considered. The United States is strong enough to sustain the burden, has the life blood of virtue and intelligence to spare to pour into the island and regenerate it, and it seems to us a duty that we ought not to shirk." He was an ardent admirer of General Grant and heartily supported him. The well remembered incident when the President vetoed the passage of the inflation measure passed by Congress called forth his warmest praise. Although Missouri was undoubtedly a soft money State then, as it is now, the Neosho *Journal* advocated a sound currency and received a rather unexpected support in so doing. He discovered that "the sound sense and honest feeling of the people did not wish inflation, even at the West and South, where the suffering is greatest, and the money most needed." The people of the country were growing very tired of the Republican Congress, and the revolt was spreading. Nothing saved the party from overwhelming disaster, and the country from financial ruin, except this brave act of the President. When the defeat in the Congressional election occurred in November of that year, the talk

of a third term for Grant became louder, and, swayed by his appreciation for what the old soldier had done for the nation, Mr. Williams became an ardent advocate of such a continuation of power. It is easy to see now that this would have been a serious mistake, and it is well for the country that the experiment was not tried. As we look back to that period and note the scandals like the Credit Mobilier, involving the retirement of Schuyler Colfax, the persistent attempts at inflation, the back pay grab, and the general rottenness in party management, it is no wonder that there was a willingness in many thoughtful minds to adopt even the drastic remedy of a dictatorship to suppress the wide spread corruption. The whole West was particularly stirred by the revelations of the wide-reaching conspiracy, known as the Credit Mobilier. On this topic Mr. Williams was well posted, as he came from the district represented by Oakes Ames. Congress tried to make the latter the scapegoat on which to visit its severest punishment, but Mr. Williams pointed out that while the Massachusetts member deserved the harshest criticism, there were others more guilty than he. Subsequent events fully justified this stand, and the general spirit of independence which was shown by the *Journal* was a credit to its editor and to the community which supported it. It was easy for him to see, after the elections, that the party could not long remain in

power and carry such a load of blunders and crimes. He was not able to remain in charge of the *Journal* until the campaign of 1876, which resulted in the momentous contest of Hayes and Tilden, and was nearly followed by a revolution in 1877 when the Republican was seated at the White House. There is not space here to give more than a summary of the topics which were handled by a free hand in an untrammeled manner. The death of Charles Sumner called forth a worthy tribute to his worth as a statesman. Civil Service reform was advocated with much force and earnestness, while the local need of a larger population led him to form an immigration society for the purpose of attracting settlers from Europe and the East. His duties as leader of public opinion were fully realized and intelligently studied, and there is no doubt that he would have more than kept pace with the growth of the West had he been permitted to remain in so congenial a field. It was his fate, however, to pay the penalty which all are obliged to suffer after once contracting malarial fever. The seeds sown in his system while lying in the trenches at Port Hudson started to grow again in the summer of 1875, and produced a long and suffering attack of chills and fever. After struggling for months with this illness, it finally became evident to the doctors that their patient must seek a different climate and never return to a district subject to the visitations of

this disease. With sad hearts the editor and his wife were compelled to realize the situation. The newspaper property was disposed of at a great sacrifice, the result of five years hard work were all swept away, and the invalid was taken back to Massachusetts to endeavor to work back to life.

He was not a man to give up the fight, however, and as soon as he could be about again he gladly accepted a position as reporter, at twelve dollars a week, on the Providence *Journal*. Thus began a work which was destined to last for fifteen years. His promotion to the post of editorial writer followed within a year, and his pay was made sufficient to give him a comfortable home. For seven years he wrote a very large portion of the editorial matter which appeared in the *Journal*, under the supervision of his chief, George W. Danielson. This work was not as congenial to him as the stirring labors he had just left in Missouri. He had to look at the questions of the day through spectacles handed him by another, and this is always hard for one to do who has previously held an independent command. He performed his work faithfully, however, and to the entire satisfaction of his employers. He found time to collect the material and write a book on Irish Poetry, which attracted the most favorable attention and found a place in the libraries of the few who are interested in this subject. He also began the forma-

tion of the library which he afterwards brought up to a very valuable collection of books, and finally bequeathed to the Providence Public Library. The sudden death of Mr. Danielson, in 1884, followed by that of Senator Anthony a few months later, changed completely the placid life of literary work, and thrust upon him the executive duties of managing editor. He then found himself again at a post where he could express his own views on the topics of the day, and was not obliged to perform so much of the drudgery of editorial writing. When the reorganization of the property was completed, he was able to purchase an interest in the stock, which still further increased his desire to make a name for himself among the editors of the country. He had, however, a difficult position to fill, owing to the peculiar conditions of Rhode Island politics. There was no such compact little oligarchy anywhere as that which ruled the destinies of this commonwealth. Anthony and Danielson had run the machine for years, and the *Journal* was their organ. Their successors did not care enough for a mouthpiece to purchase the newspaper, and wanted it understood that they desired only to be let alone. This separation of two such great powers in the State naturally attracted much attention, and everywhere curiosity was aroused to see how the *Journal* could support itself without the patronage of the throne. A trial of strength was

not long in coming. In the year 1886 Mr. Williams actually had the audacity to support the Democratic candidate for governor against that staunch Republican, George Peabody Wetmore. The struggle was a most interesting one, and to those who were not too deeply dyed in the wool, a most amusing spectacle. The wrath of the faithful was very great, and was publicly made evident by a solemn function which took place at the leading theatre in Providence. Mr. Williams, as an individual, was invited to be present and witness the official execution of the editor of the *Journal*. The axe fell on the neck of the recalcitrant journalist, but the man was left alive and laughing. This, however, was almost the only exhibition of anger on the part of the defeated politicians. They soon recovered their good nature and kindly allowed the *Journal* to fill out its full growth as a vigorous newspaper. During all the years that Mr. Williams was in politics there was no single incident which amused him so much as this one, when he was "read out" of the party he had worked with for a quarter of a century.

His enjoyment of his life at this time would have been complete had not the failing health of his wife caused him the deepest anxiety. For more than fifteen years she had been his helpmeet in every vicissitude of fortune, and his dependence on her counsel and assistance had grown greater and greater. Just

at the time when he needed her the most she was taken away from him, leaving him utterly desolate for the remainder of his life. He never recovered from the shock of this calamity. He was obliged, almost immediately, to drop his work and seek relief in an ocean voyage. He once more visited Ireland, hoping to be distracted by revisiting the old scenes of his former journeyings. He had scarcely landed at Queenstown, however, when he was seized with fever and lay sick for weeks in the house of a friend. As soon as he recovered he began writing letters, and strove to recall the events of long ago. This labor seemed to bring him much relief, and after a few months he returned to his desk in Providence. For over two years he struggled on, but he could only struggle, he could not carry his work along easily. The routine became oppressive to him and he gave up more and more to others. Finally, in 1891, he decided to go to London to consult with the best physicians there. He never returned to his place on the *Journal*. Another phase of his active career had ended. The six years had been full enough of incident, although life in Providence could never possess the elements of personal adventure and open air incident which had characterized his sojourn in the West. Many a time he longed for the freedom of the old days which none of the superior comforts of more settled communities could

give him. He was not a man who cared for social relaxation. He preferred above all other occupation an evening at home with a book in his hand, but he had not the leisure he desired to give to literary work.

The opportunity now came to him to be relieved from detail work and devote all his thoughts to subjects of a wider ranger. The door was opened to him to enter just such employments as he could best carry on. First, however, he must regain his health. After a few months rest he thought this was sufficiently restored to enable him to start for Texas, there to gather information regarding the life of Sam Houston, the famous pioneer. He only got as far as Washington when he was taken seriously ill, and was ordered by the doctors to return home as soon as he was able to travel. He started again by sea after a few months, and had a most successful trip. He was then able to finish his book, which was published by Houghton, Mifflin & Co., and adds an important chapter to the history of the great State which revolted, in 1846, from Mexico, and was brought into the Union by its first President. The favorable comment received by him on this work, and the experiences he enjoyed in Texas while col. lecting the material, encouraged him very much. He had first heard of Houston particularly while associating with the Indians during his residence at

Neosho. The fame of the old pioneer was still kept alive in many a wigwam, and the more Mr. Williams looked into the story of his life the more he became convinced that he could rescue important details from oblivion. He had had this work in mind for fifteen years, but feared he would never have leisure to complete it. The ease and promptness which attended his final efforts showed him that he could now undertake even more ambitious designs, and devote his energies entirely to such compilations. He realized, however, that it was necessary for him to find a more suitable winter climate than that of Narragansett Bay, and he decided to visit the West Indies. He was not mistaken in his choice. Once within the charms of those happy isles he was aware that he need seek no further for a place of residence. He also found there just the material he desired to work upon, and it seemed to him that he could ask for no greater opportunities than those now within his grasp. He had studied carefully the folk-lore of Ireland, he had followed some remarkable Indian legends from one tribe to another, and on the shores of the Caribbean Sea he ran across traces of myths, brought from Africa by the negroes, which showed that there have been experiences in common among the earlier inhabitants of Europe, North America and Africa. It seemed possible to work up many analogies illustrating the persistence of legends through

all peoples and ages, and, therefore, proving that they must have been founded on actual facts. It was a work to which an enthusiast could easily have devoted twenty years and not have exhausted the outer fringe of the material to be gone over. St. Kitts was the island selected for a winter home on the second visit, and it was as delightful a one as could be found in any part of the world. Near by is an island owned by the Dutch, called Saba, which is an extinct volcano. The only settlements on this island are in the crater. Here the people live, surrounded by high walls, and almost cut off from all intercourse with the rest of the world. There are families of negroes who never come into contact with off-islanders, and are descended from slaves brought direct from Africa. This was chosen as the very first spot to be investigated, for here it seemed that the threads of the skein might be found at their beginnings. A passage was engaged on a fishing boat, and the island reached. While riding up the only narrow trail which leads over the top of the crater wall, he was thrown from his horse, receiving a sharp blow on the head. He thought nothing of the incident but went on with his work, and returned to St. Kitts with a goodly quantity of notes. This was the end of all his labors, however. He was seized with an attack of cerebral congestion, and died March 9, 1896, without regaining consciousness. It seemed

sad that the end should come to him thus alone in a strange land, and if he could have been spared he would have written a book worthy of the subject to which he was devoted. Literature would have been enriched by such an addition to its pages, and much light might have been thrown upon matters now hidden from our view. The man himself, however, if given his choice, would have asked for no more fitting close to his career. He was giving himself to a cause worthy of any man's efforts, and if his fate decreed that he was to be stricken down while struggling for more light on a dark subject, he would be the last one to complain. He began his life as soon as he was able to choose his path as a student, and he finished it while happily employed. Other laborers are busy in the field of folk-lore, and will, eventually, go over the same ground that Mr. Williams had mapped out as his specialty.

RICHARD S. HOWLAND.

FIRST VISIT.

UNDER THE TRADE WINDS.

I.

THE ISLAND OF NEVIS.

A QUAINT OLD HOUSE OF THE ANCIENT PERIOD—DELIGHTS OF A VOYAGE DOWN THE WINDWARD ISLANDS—THE PAST AND PRESENT OF CHARLESTOWN.

ANTIGUA, W. I., February 12, '95.

Where are the swallows fled ?
Frozen and dead.
Perchance upon some bleak and stormy shore.
Ah, no.
Far over summer seas
They wait in grateful ease
The balmy southern breeze
To bring them to their southern home once more.

These lines by Adelaide Anne Proctor might well illustrate the almost swallow flight of the fortunate voyagers who leave the bleak and barren shores of New England for a sojourn in the lotus lands of the West Indies. When the good steamship Madiana left the port of New York on February 2 it was in a heavy snowstorm, which almost obscured the outlines

of the shore. The bay was full of floating ice, which tossed and ground in the murky and leaden water. When the steamer passed Sandy Hook it was in the teeth of a heavy gale, and as she ploughed her strong way toward the south the breakers washed over the sides and the deck was slippery with sliding streams. For the first two days the hardier passengers, who ventured on deck to taste the acrid and inspiring breath of the breeze, wore their heaviest wraps, or sought refuge in the warm smoking room. The tables were very thinly tenanted, and from the state-rooms came the inarticulate but very intelligible sounds of sea-sickness. By the third day, when the vessel had entered the Gulf Stream, the atmosphere began to have a softer feeling and the passengers gradually to occupy their steamer chairs and to watch the miles of glittering foam, sparkling in the sunshine, with somewhat more tranquil minds. With every hour it seemed to grow warmer and brighter, the sea to become a more translucent blue and the atmosphere to take on a softer and more opaline hue. Great patches of brown seaweed flecked the waves, and flying fish darted in spots of glittering white from the gentle billows. From day to day the wraps diminished in weight and the cabin was almost entirely deserted for the deck, where some wasted their time in reading or talk, and others more wise drank in the beauty and vastness of the ineffable sea.

On the afternoon of the fifth day the first land was visible like a misty cloud on the horizon, which gradually grew nearer and took more definite shape as a mountainous island. It was St. Thomas. Its first aspect was not tropical. There were no palm trees waving on the summits of the hills, which looked somewhat bare and barren, and without any richness of green in their vegetation. By night we were at anchor in the harbor, which is one of the finest in the world, perfectly landlocked and sheltered from every gale. In days gone by St. Thomas was the great entreport of the West Indies. Its harbor was crowded with vessels of every maritime nation, and its great warehouses, which are now empty and falling to decay, were filled with merchandise. When we arrived it was animated with the presence of the three white ships of the American squadron, headed by the New York, and by a single French, German and Russian warship. The air was vocal with the shrill whistles of the boatswains, and the twelve oared cutters and steam launches were crossing each other in every direction. In the evening the bands played their national anthems, and the fiery notes of the Marseillaise were responded to by the sturdy *Der Wacht an Rhein*, while the Russians brazenly entone God Save the Czar, and from the farther distance the Star Spangled Banner warmed the American heart. All this time the little town lay quiet and still

beneath its red-tiled roofs and under the shelter of its circling hills, and the garrison of home-sick soldiers, which Denmark maintains here, made no reply to the amicably defiant serenades of the floating visitors. On shore one finds that St. Thomas is fairly within the West Indies, with all the characteristics of the population, in which the blacks largely predominate, and in the woods the vegetation is distinctly tropical, with the palms, the mahogany and the gigantic silk-cotton tree, with smooth bark and bulging trunks.

But the most distinctly West Indian island, which we have yet seen, our port of call including St. Thomas, St. Croix and St. Kitts, is the little island of Nevis. It is not in the regular routes of the steamers, but is gained in an hour and a half's sail by a small boat from Basse Terre, St. Kitts. The morning was a delightful one, the sky full of soft, fleecy clouds, which now and then darkened into mist and rain, sweeping in sheets of falling water over the wine-dark sea, and again lifting into white veils upon the mountain tops and letting the sun shine in unclouded lustre upon the sparkling vegetation and the sea, which was turned by its caress to the richest turquoise blue. The white gulls screamed with that voice which is the very accent of the ocean, as they swept about in what seemed like a madness of activity, and now and then a greater pelican would wing his

heavy way above the sea. The little steamer coasted along the shore of St. Kitts with its high hills apparently covered with unbroken forest, and then played and rolled through the heavy waves that swept through the channel, which divides the island from Nevis. Nevis is dominated by a lofty hill, which looks down on the open roadstead. This morning it wore a light gauze veil of vapor around its summit, but down its sides there were patches of the soft green verdure of the cane fields, and the darker woods were bathed in the sunlight. As we approached the shore the white foam of the breakers was seen combing far up on the beach, and the heavy thunder of their fall gave a strong symphony of ocean music. The sea was so rough that the steamer could not approach the wharf, and the few passengers were transferred to the shore by the skillful hands of the negro boatmen.

The town of Charlestown, which is the capital of Nevis, is a small hamlet of a few hundred inhabitants, and is hardly more than a single street, stretching along the open beach. On the sea front there is a single line of cocoa palms lifting their feathered heads high in air, and beneath them are the huts of the negro fishermen, with their boats hauled up on the beach and their nets drying in the sun. The town is made of quaint old houses of the ancient period of West Indian architecture, with mossy stone

walls and tiled roofs. There are no signs of any business except a few shops of general merchandise, and an air of gentle decay broods over the whole place. There is a little public garden of a few feet square, in which roses and rhododendrons were in bloom, and round it were a few negro women with cakes and vegetables for sale. The white population were few, but in amends the negroes were many. Strong black wenches passed by with heavy burdens on their heads, walking with that firm, solid and graceful step which comes from the habit of carrying burdens, with only the movement of the hips, the bust and head remaining perfectly steady and upright. All were smiling and happy, showing their white teeth and ready to respond with a soft "good m-a-a-wning" in the sweet, drawling Creole accent. Some were carrying baskets of bright colored West Indian fish of strange shapes and abnormal aspect, and others great burdens of vegetables, boxes and loads of every miscellaneous character. One would not have been surprised to see a negress with a kerosene lamp or a mirror on her head, or, if there were a square piano on the island, to see it borne with a steady step by four of these women caryatide. The men seemed to have little to do, and to be doing that without any energy. They idled on street corner and talked with a conversation heavily punctuated with guffaws, or munched sugar cane in sleek and

shiny content. Shoes, it is needless to say, were unknown, and garments were reduced to the simpliest articles of necessity. Altogether Charlestown seemed sunk in a gentle and tranquil sleep, its slumber soothed with the tranquil booming of the surf, and steeping in the warmth of the kindly sun.

But Charlestown was once as wealthy and lively a place for its size as any in the West Indies. In the days when a plantation in the rich soil of Nevis was a gold mine, there were wealthy merchants who dwelt here, and a rich and luxurious planting population to lead a grand train of luxury and expense. Besides, Charlestown was the Saratoga of the West Indies, where all the wealth and fashion of the Windward Island gathered to spend the season at the famous sulphur baths. About ten minutes walk from the town are the ruins of an immense stone hotel, which must have been able to accommodate several hundred guests. It now looks like the ruins of an ancient castle, so heavy are the crenelated walls of a massive grey,

"By the caper overrooted, by the gourd overscored,"

and three magnificent flights of stone steps lead up to the lofty entrance hall. One can imagine what bevies of dark and languid Creole beauties in diaphanous muslins have passed up those steps, escorted by white-coated planters, or officers from the ships and

garrisons in more brilliant uniforms, or danced and flirted in the lofty ball room, where now the clothes of the negro family which keeps the bath are hung to dry. Only the central portion of the building is roofed, the top story of the wing having entirely fallen in, and from the walled terrace to which one climbs by a rickety stair there is a magnificent view of the town and the gleaming plain of the sea, while the soft and spicy breeze gently caresses the cheeks. It is a gentle river embowered in luxuriant vegetation that has kindly wrapped and softened its decay, and is perhaps more suited to the scene than when it was alive with hilarious gayety.

The bath house is at the foot of a gentle declivity in front of the hotel. It is an ancient and dilapidated building, whose battered doors move reluctantly on their hinges. To get to the bath you descend a long flight of brick steps leading to a pool of limpid green water with a gentle stir and flow. It is dark, the only light coming through cracks in the shutters, and it is not reassuring to hear the scuttle of a lizard or some other beast as you reach the platform. However, you take heart and disrobe. At the first step the water seems unpleasantly warm, but soon a gentle languor and a sense of infinite deliciousness comes over you. You fairly wallow in delight as you sit with the water rippling up to your chin, and you feel that you could rest for hours in absolute

beatitude as the gentle warmth steals through your limbs. And when you emerge you feel as though you had never been clean before, so complete is the sense of the removal of all impurities. It is like the fountain of youth in its effects, and if Ponce de Leon had found it he would have been assured temporarily at least that the object of his long quest had been attained. Although a strong sulphur spring, there is not the slightest unpleasant smell, such as sometimes accompanies a mineral bath, and the waters are of a limpid purity. Its effects are considered very good for rheumatic complaints, and stories of wonderful cures are told of its waters. It does not seem impossible that in the future, when the attractions of the West Indies as a winter resort become better known, that a new hotel may arise near the old one, and that an unusual crowd of visitors from the United States may replace with their exotic ways the departed glories of the extinct Creole aristocracy. There are certainly far less attractive places where fashion resorts in search of health or to dissipate the burden of its ennui. But in that case Charlestown would cease to be a typical West Indian town and become a mere tourist caravansary like Bermuda or St. Augustine, and those who can now delight in its quaint and old-world flavor would not come to be dinned and dazed by American hotel life.

Nevis is not one of the historical West India

islands. It was not fought for and refought for as were the other islands when France, Spain and England struggled for the possession of the pearls of the Antilles, nor was it a place of enormous loots, as was the neighboring island of St. Eustatia when Rodney swooped upon it. Everyone will tell you that it was the birthplace of Alexander Hamilton, as they will in Santa Cruz that the illustrious Peter Jackson first saw the light there. A more famous man than either has, however, left the trace of his visit there. In the old Fig Tree Church, a few miles from town, the register shows that Horatio Nelson, then a post-captain in the British navy, was there married to Mrs. Fanny Nesbitt, the faithful woman whom he deserted for the brazen charms of Lady Hamilton, and of whom he wrote in one of the most singular expressions of feeling ever uttered by man "that if the Lord should remove the obstacle to their union," meaning with his mistress, as though heaven should interfere to sanction his adultery by murder. Meditating upon the strangeness of humanity, we may leave Nevis to its sempiternal calm.

II.

PORT OF SPAIN.

THE LARGEST TOWN IN THE WINDWARD ISLANDS — A GLIMPSE OF HINDOSTAN IN A COOLIE VILLAGE.

PORT OF SPAIN, Trinidad, February 22, '95.

It was the early morning when the Madiana bore up for one of the Dragon's Mouths, which separates the Gulf of Paria from the open sea, and whose fierce currents so embarrassed the caravels of Columbus. The entrance is narrow, with precipitous heights on either side, covered with primeval vegetation, and showing no signs of habitation, save here and there, where some steep ravine broke the wall, and a fisherman's hut shone white amid the embowering foliage with his boat upon the beach and his net drying in the sun. The sky was fleecy bright, with delicate opaline tints, and the early moon spread a rosy tint over the green sea, for in these shallower waters the ocean has lost its turquoise tint. The gulls were busy questing their morning repast, and the pelicans were winging their heavy flight along the beaches. Now and then some hideous hammer-headed shark,

who comes near to be the most unformed and villainous monster that haunts the seas, would dart away from the side of the ship and sink like a shadow in the dark depths. All these waters are haunted by the memory of Robinson Crusoe of York, mariner, who, although but a figment of the brain, is yet more substantial than any of the living persons of to-day, and will exist in perennial life long after the Madiana has disintegrated into iron rust, and its passengers been forgotten as if they had never been. It might have been such a current as this in the Dragon's Mouth which swept his periagua at sea when he started out to visit the wrecked ship, and one of the blue islets in this far distance was the one on which he lived his life of busy solitude. It was this very great island of Trinidad from which came the cannibals, who made merry on human flesh around their cook fires, and upon whom he and his man Friday "let fly in the name of God," which has so often been the method of impressing the lessons of civilization upon the heathen savages.

But the current of the Dragon's Mouth does not impede the strong way of the Madiana, and in a short time we have opened out the broad bay surrounded by circling shores, and the town of Port of Spain lies before us. It is not yet nine o'clock, but the heat is already intense. In the thinnest of summer suits we perspire drippingly, and it takes some courage to face

the thought of going ashore to the low-lying town that seems to shimmer as if with a furnace heat. However, we are here to see the sights, and must not shrink from a vapor bath, or even from the apprehension of a sun-stroke. Port of Spain is much the largest town in the Windward Islands, and has all the appearance of a tropical city in its architecture and ways. Streams of open water flow through the gutters, and the scavengering buzzards hop lazily away from under your feet. Everybody is *en negligeé* with panamas and flowing garments, and even the policemen are

"Clad in white samite, mystic, wonderful,"

but with all the proverbial dignity of their class. But Port of Spain is only like the rest of the West Indies, with the additional flavor of a somewhat cosmopolitan port, and perhaps a slightly larger proportion of drinking shops. There is, however, a colony near through which we may hope to catch a glimpse of Hindostan without the fatigue of the long journey to farther India. It is the Coolie village, where the workmen who were brought from India to supply a more tractable and persevering labor than that of the negroes live. The mind is somewhat made up to see a white and clear compound embosomed under the shade of embowering trees in which white-clothed figures move gently about or sit

plying their handicrafts in the shade, while women in parti-colored robes nurse their brown children or cook their rice over little fires. The reality is far different from this. The village, which is about a mile from the extremity of the town, is a single long street of miserable wooden huts, thatched with straw or covered with corrugated iron, and not differing in any way from those of the negroes of the other islands. All life is open to the view. There are men in turbans and dingy white robes gathered at the thigh, who move about in various avocations, or driving teams of the hump-backed Indian cattle. They have sometimes finely-cut and aristocratic features, with long and lank black hair, and an air of subdued gravity quite different from the open-mouthed gayety of the negroes. Some of them lift their hands in salute, but without a smile, and many of them seem to wear an air of sullen dislike, while all are apathetic and manifest no curiosity at the sight of their visitors. Some of the jewelers, who make the bangles with which the women are universally adorned, and who are in fact by this means the savings banks of their husbands, were at work under sheds over charcoal fires, and with no apparent implements except a pair of pincers and a small hammer, and there were a few other small shops including those "licensed to sell spirituous liquors by retail." Some women moved about with brown

naked children astride on their hips, their shapely arms decorated with silver bangles from the wrist to the elbow and with plaques in the fore-arm; others bent over the cooking pots; and others lay about in *negligeé* atitudes lifting lazy eyes to glance at the carriage. If there had ever been any habit among their caste in India of concealing the face from the eyes of the strangers it had vanished during their sojourn in Trinidad, and they were as frank and indifferent as their neighbors, the negresses. There were not many striking figures among them either for beauty or originality. There was one old fellow with white hair and beard, who sat in a cart behind a pair of hump-backed oxen, who would have made a perfect picture of an Indian Silenus without the habit of intoxication. Contrary to most of his compatriots, who are thin and spare, he was round and fat, with a rotund belly, and even an apparent tinge of red in his mahogany cheeks. He smiled broadly with a fat and good-humored smile that showed his white teeth, and passed on tranquil and content. There was also a beautiful baby boy of some three or four years of age, who was toddling beside the roadway, clad in a necklace and a pair of bangles. He lifted his large, deep and liquid eyes smilingly at us as we passed, and the brown skin of his delicately moulded limbs shone in the warm sun with a deep and lovely brown glow. If the old man was an

Indian Silenus this was an Indian Cupid, that might have been pillowed in some gigantic lotus flower, and floated down the Ganges as in the ancient legend.

But the most of the figures were commonplace, not to say sordid and miserable, and indeed it would have been folly to expect types of Indian beauty and distinction in a village of the lowest class of coolies transported to a foreign land, and subject to all the degrading influences of their surroundings. Still it must be confessed that there was somewhat of a disappointment in the lack of characteristic originality in this Hindoo village. Negroes are thickly scattered in the settlement, although the Hindoos refuse to mix with them matrimonially, and there was even the grinning sensual face of a fat Chinaman peering out from a doorway. In fact, negro features are quite as prominent as Hindoo in the aspect of the village. Two stout negro men were sitting in front of a hut playing the tam-tam, which is a sort of single-headed drum, with their fingers. They were playing with great energy and vigor, and the air was not without a sort of crude harmony in its rapid beat and reiteration. The tune may have been the one celebrated in "The Cruise of the Midge,"

O ! guinea corn,
Niam, niam you,

but it is said that there are some really very skillful

performers on these rude instruments, and Sir Spencer St. John, in his "Black Republic," gives a negro's account of a tam-tam tournament, which is as interesting and spirited as the bagpipe contest between Robin Oig and Allan Breck Stuart. The only other thing of interest in the coolie village was the temple. Temple indeed! It was a miserable shed, hexagonal in shape and some twenty feet in diameter. It was open to the gaze of every passer, and within could be seen some images and religious paraphernalia, and an elderly priest was engaged in sprinkling some sort of incense around the room and upon a couch, which was apparently his bed. It did not look curious enough to warrant the trouble of taking off the shoes to enter, although we were told that with that precaution and probably, also, with an offering, we might have done so without offence. The type of religion, which such a temple represented, did not seem more intelligent than the African rites of fetichism, which are probably still secretly practised in the same village, and some of the ultra-refined, who are trying to find in Buddhism a substitute for Christianity, would certainly have had a revulsion at the sight of this coolie temple. Beyond the village the road entered the deep, dark tropical forest, and finally came to a large white building in a clearing at some distance to one side. No object was visible about it, and an air of deathly stillness brooded

over it, as it lay burning in the sun in the midst of the greenery. It was the leper hospital where this plague, imported from the Orient with the human packages of labor, was slowing eating out the lives of its victims, and threatening the island with its grim shadow. It was with something of a chill with which we turned back to the noisy and swarming life of the coolie village, and we were glad to escape from it into the town again.

But it was not the last of the Hindoos. Some enterprising agent of an American show had gathered a troupe with which to adorn a dime museum, and probably to exhibit as genuine East Indian jugglers. They were of all ages and appearances, and among them was one really handsome young woman. She had large, lustrous eyes, and a profile of Jewish regularity. She was richly dressed with a white muslin robe and a flowing upper garment of bright colors, which she drew over her head. She wore a large golden ornament in her nose, which fell below her lips, a jeweled band across her forehead, and her arms were literally covered with bangles and plaques from wrists to armpits. With her dress and ornaments she might have sat for a picture of Spenser's

> Duessa, darkly bright,
> Adorned with diamonds and rich jewels rare.

But, poor thing, she was not happy with all her

finery. As she sat on a camp stool in the stern of the launch, surrounded by a group of the passengers, who stared at her as if she was some wild animal, and made flippant remarks, whose purport she probably understood, the dark eyes filled with tears, and she delicately lifted her nose ring to relieve with her handkerchief the expression of grief which affects the nostrils. She was going to a new, a strange and cold world, and she was leaving a home in the green woods with perhaps a lover or a mother there. Not all the glory of being placarded in letters a foot long as the daughter of the Akhoond of Swat or the Maharajah of Serinjapatam and sitting in state by the side of the fat woman and the india-rubber man will repay her for the easy, warm life of the tropics. Her mahogany skin will turn blue with cold, and her diaphanous robes be replaced by clumsy woolens, which even then will not keep out the keen and deathly chill of a sunless land. Perhaps she will meet death there, with his icy spear, and never see again the warm fields of Trinidad or the dusty plains of the Deecan. All this she knows not, but she is evidently suffering keenly. Fortunately the kind ladies in the ship welcomed her with all the grace and sympathy of gentle womanhood, and a faint smile or two came back to her face, as the Madiana bore away with thrashing propeller from Port of Spain, and she even endured the persecutions of the Kodak

fiends, who have added a new burden to human existence, without wincing. But, after all, the gentle heart is sore for this simple daughter of the tropics, who is going to be made a show of, instead of leading her own natural life and bringing up her brown children under a thatched roof in the shade of the palms.

SECOND VISIT.

III.

ST. KITTS.

A TYPICAL EVENING IN THE LEEWARD ISLES—THE OLD FORT ON BRIMSTONE HILL—SKETCHES AT SOMBRERO AND ST. KITTS—THE LITTLE TOWN OF BASSE TERRE—CHARM OF THE LOTUS LAND—SUBSTANTIAL STAGNATION.

Basse Terre, St. Kitts, Dec. 20, '95.

The first land one sees in the direct course of 1500 miles from New York to the Leeward Islands and from the grey seas of the North to the turquoise waters of the South, is Sombrero island, a barren peak like a sentinel at the entrance to the island gardens. Upon it the lighthouse gleamed in the dusk of the swiftly-falling night, and shone like a lurid spark on the horizon under the thickly-sown stars of the tropic sky. The keepers of this pole-star in the desert of the seas must lead a strange and lonely life watching the white sails appear and disappear on the horizon and the trails of vapor of the steamers passing northward or southward, each on its way regardless of the inhabitants of the rock.

Their only visitor is the steamer of the lighthouse service on its quarterly round, and perhaps an occasional fisherman, and through the long days they may sleep, and at night keep watch and ward amid the sleepless wash or thunder of the seas, as much separated from the rest of the world as if they were on another planet. It is not likely that they have any sublime thoughts amid the mystery of the sea and the glory of the sky, or that their life is anything but the monotonous performance of their duties with the nostalgia, which must come to the dullest human mind in such an isolation. Sombrero has a tale of cruelty connected with it, perhaps only one out of many which have escaped record, in the days when pirate captains marooned their captives on desert islands to die of hunger and thirst, instead of more mercifully making them walk the plank. On the 14th of December, 1807, Capt. Warwick Lake of Her Majesty's sloop, Recruit, ordered a seaman of the name of Jefferies to be landed on the island, from which he was fortunately rescued by an American vessel when on the verge of death by starvation. This was too much for the authorities of the Admiralty, even in the days when the cat-o'-nine-tails stimulated the British tars to victory, and Captain Lake was tried by court martial at Portsmouth and dismissed the service for his exaggerated ideas concerning the use of discipline.

In the morning, after having passed in the darkness the Danish island of St. Croix and the Dutch islands of Saba and St. Eustatia, one wakes in the roadstead of St. Kitts under the delightful grey freshness of the morning sky and with the soft breath of the tropic seas fanning the cheeks. The town lies in a basin of encircling hills, with the red roofs of its houses broken by tufts of verdure. The square tower of a dark stone church dominates the centre, and at either extremity are rows of palm trees, and beneath them the fishermen's huts with their nets drying in the sun and their boats drawn up on the beach. In the centre of the island rises the lofty cone of Mount Misery, wooded and green to the summit, which is wrapped in a lucent veil of cloud. The sea is calm, but a constant fringe of white foam rolls up along the beach, showing that the deep swell of the Caribbean seas is never still. Pelicans pass with the heavy flight of their beating wings above the glassy surface, or plunge with a headlong splash into the water after a fish. White gulls flit about with that cry, which is the very voice of the winds and waves. The sails of the fishing boats gleam against the soft green of the circling shores as they are coasting out to sea, and two or three of the country sloops and an American three-masted schooner are riding easily at anchor. Everything has an air of quiet and tranquillity suited to the

summer land, except the noisy negro boatmen, who are gathered in a flock around the steamer, clamoring for a chance to convey the passengers on shore. Their black faces shine and their white teeth glitter as they announce their claim to be the first to solicit the attention of massa and vaunt the excellence of the "Ellen Rose" or the "Mongoose."

The little town of Basse Terre is soon traversed. It has a public square with a town clock in the centre, and a beautiful public garden or plaza embowered in tropical vegetation, and shaded at one end by a magnificent banyan tree, whose templed boughs and thick foliage makes almost a darkness in the surrounding gloom and glare. The shops and warehouses are all old, but of solid stone, and have an air of substantial stagnation and calm resistance to the decay of prosperity, which has come with the fall in the price of sugar. On the side streets there are the residence houses of wood with their verandas and jalouses, mostly grey from want of paint, and having an air of gentle torpor. Stretching out into the country and along the farther beaches are the rows of negro huts of the flimsiest construction, whose inhabitants live mostly in the open air, and from whose yards rises the smoke of the cooking fires, and where the women are busy with their household affairs, while their lords and masters are mostly loafing about in the sun. The children are inumer-

able, mostly clad in a single garment, and as frisky and happy as little nigs and little pigs are proverbially supposed to be. Now and then one sees the white face of some trader or planter or dapper clerk in the treasury office, or some pale and delicate Creole lady under her sunshade; but for the most part the people are black, shading upward in all colors from the coffee-brown to the clear, colorless skin, the flashing dark eyes and shining black hair alone indicating the fatal tinge given by a remote drop of African blood. Some few are neatly dressed and evidently belong to the colored aristocracy. Clerks in stores, seamstresses, *blanchisseuses de fin*, but for the most part they are coarsely clad, the men and women alike barefooted, and the latter with gayly colored handkerchiefs about their heads. They speak with the soft, drawling creole accent, which cannot be interpreted in any words, but which from the lips of young women and children has a plaintive sweetness and grace altogether charming.

If you are so fortunate as to have your window face the sea you will taste the full charm of this lotus land in the evening. When the red ball of the sun has touched the rim of the sea and then has suddenly sunk from sight, the large and brilliant stars and thickly sown constellations illumine the deep blue sky and sparkle in the tranquil waters. The soft wind, fresh with the life giving scent of the sea, blows

gently in, banishing all the heat from the cool darkness of the room. The calm, heavy roll of the surf fills the air with a monotonous murmur, the very lullaby of the tropic night. The lights of the boats gleam red in the harbor. Far on the horizon a ghostly sail is fading out of sight into the mystery of the sea. Under the window a girl passes singing a snatch of a plaintive creole song. As so rarely in our fevered existence, absolute calm and tranquillity take possession of the spirit, and nature gives the bliss of perfect communion with the soul.

Some twelve miles from Basse Terre is the ancient fortress on Brimstone Hill. The road winds by the sea shore all the way. It is lined with negro cabins, mostly of a single room each, of wood, raised on stones or posts, some two or three feet from the ground, and without glass to the windows. Some few are of still more primitive construction of wattled cane and thatched roofs. Above them wave the feathery tops of the palms, as they are shaded by the deeper greens of the tamarinds and the mossy foliage of the banyans with drooping festoons of fibres. The deep scarlet hibiscus and other brilliant flowers bloom here and there by the roadside. At times we pass through long fields of cane waving and rustling in the wind, and here and there men are cutting it with their heavy machetas, while the women are rolling it into huge bundles and carrying it on their

heads to the carts. At long distances rise the tall chimneys of the sugar works from the low white buildings of the plantation and the thick sweet smell of boiling sugar fills the air. Men are piling the megass, or refuse of the crushed sugar cane, into huge stacks, which have a smell like dried corn husks. Some of the fields have already been reaped, and men and women are engaged in replanting the rich black earth with lusty strokes of the great clumsy hoes. In some of the fields the fresh green plants are already sprouting. Every now and again we pass through the bed of a dried stream, carefully paved with stones to prevent the ford from being washed away, and surmounted by a high stone foot-bridge, giving token of what torrents sometimes pour down from the mountains in the rainy season. Then we come to a clear running stream dashing among dark rocks and boulders. Up the stream, under the green shade of the trees, negro women are standing in the water with their skirts trussed to mid-leg, engaged in massacring garments with wooden pestles for the benefit of the button manufacture. At about half the distance we come upon the picturesque village of Old Road, stretched along both sides of the highway, with its substantial church and ruined or abandoned old colonial houses among the cheap shops and negro cabins. This was the site of the first English settlement of the island, which was made under Sir

Thomas Warner in 1623. A French colony afterward amicably divided the island, settling at Basse Terre, and assisting the English in expelling the native Caribs. The two colonies afterward inevitably quarrelled, and expelled each other in turn, with the aid of expeditions from Martinique or squadrons from England. Finally, after being many times fought over and taken and retaken, it settled into the possession of the English, who built the immense fortification we are now approaching, and which they called the Gibraltar of the West Indies.

It is on the summit of a hill more than a thousand feet in height above the level of the sea, and steeply precipitous on three sides. In the rear a steeply winding road leads to the top. The road is embowered with trees and pastured with goats, yoked in couples, cattle, and a litter of funny little black pigs. The steep sides of the hill are covered with thick vegetation, the home, it is said, of a colony of monkeys, but a curious scrutiny failed to detect one of their gray faces and sharp beady eyes, peering down upon the visitors. The guide offered the time-honored legend that they are sometimes caught by fillling half a pumpkin with toddy, which they partake to the loss of their equilibrium and power of locomotion, and only recover their senses, like human beings sometimes, behind the bars of a cell; but the inexpert traveller declines to vouch for the fact.

About half-way up the road was defended by a stone gateway, now falling in ruins, and two of the old cannon, which defended the fortress, are now sunk, muzzle downward, in the earth. At length the ruins of the fortress are reached. They are of massive gray stone, several acres in extent. On the lower floors and beneath the level of the summit were the rooms used as barracks, the magazine and officers' quarters, communicating by stone galleries, and an immense covered cistern, calculated, it is said, to hold a seven years' supply of water. Traces of whitewash are visible under the sheltering roofs, but the rank tropical vegetation has pushed its way through the court yard, and trees, flowering bushes, and spiny cactus plants spread thick in every coign. Crossing an abyss by means of a couple of rotten planks, one comes to the stairway, which climbs to the top. There, on a wide space, paved with blocks of stone and protected on the outward side by a parapet, the eye rejoices in a view of exquisite variety and beauty. Beneath lies the infinite plain of the deep, blue sea, apparently utterly tranquil and motionless, but a line of white foam on the far stretching beach shows the roll of its never-resting swell. The white sails of boats are scattered here and there, idly drifting in the calm. Apparently, only a few miles off in the lucent air, rises the lofty cone of the island of St. Eustatius, in shape like

Napoleon's cocked hat, and beyond it, in the silvery haze of the horizon, the smaller island of Saba. Beneath is the village of Sandy Point, also one of the ancient settlements of the island, and on a point projecting out into the sea, the roofs of the cottages of the lazaretto, where a hundred or more of miserable lepers from this and the neighboring islands are being eaten piece-meal by death in the midst of this eternal sunshine, greenery and sea-scented air. On the land side the fortress is dominated by the summit of Mount Misery, which rises steeply green across a fertile valley in whose centre are the smoke-stack and buildings of a sugar plantation. The days of the Gibraltar of the West Indies have indeed gone by, for, even if it had not been abandoned, with guns of a modern calibre, it could be easily be pounded into a heap of granite blocks from the neighboring heights. The top of Mount Misery is clad with a turban of fleecy cloud, and here and there in its gorges are the dark currents of rain, which in these islands may pass within a quarter of a mile, leaving the spectator in full sunshine. Seaward to these, slender dark curtains of rain

"Stalk all the horizon round,"

and darken with fleeting shadows the fleecy sky and turquoise sea.

Here, stretched beneath the shadow of the flagstaff

tower in the airy solitude, the silence made only the more impressive by the plaintive chirp of a bird in the thicket, one may meditate on the days when this fortress was full of military life and animation. When the sentries paced the esplanade with Brown Bess on the shoulder in the burning sun, when the court yard was full of soldiers, and when the gallant officers fought the heat with brandy, and dreamed of loot in the neighboring Dutch and French islands in the fortunate event of a war. And these tranquil seas have heard the thunder of the cannon of the fleets of Sir Samuel Hood and the Count de Grasse, and borne the ships of Horatio Nelson in his fiery young manhood. Not to speak of the vessels of the buccaneers and "gentlemen of fortune," who flew the black flag, and whose exploits and plunderings have passed into the mist of oblivion with the winds that blew them, there is enough authentic history in the West Indies to fill many thrilling volumes. Admirals like Cochrane and Sir John Jervis, and commanders like Sir Ralph Abercrombie and Sir John Moore, have fought desperate battles by sea and land for the possession of the Antilles, once so rich and coveted, but now so poor and neglected, and many a hero, whose name is only preserved in the dusty papers of the Admiralty Office, has performed feats of desperate courage in cutting out privateers or fighting yard-arm to yard-arm with French and

Spanish frigates. During the war of 1812, American privateers swarmed in these waters, getting rich booty from the merchant ships and coasting vessels, and exasperating the inhabitants of the islands to the verge of distraction. Now many of the inhabitants of the West Indies see the only future for the country in annexation to the United States, and would welcome the peaceful advent of the Stars and Stripes, accompanied by the avalanche of American dollars to rejuvenate the sugar industry. But this is only an impossible dream like all the visions of the past, which have passed through the mind in this hour of lotus-eating. The past cannot be restored, and the future offers little but a continuance of stubborn decay with the shadow of the fecund African threatening to cover the land, and build his hut amid the ruins of the sugar houses.

As we ride home the showers chase us before and behind. The clear streams that we passed in the morning are now muddy torrents, showing that floods have gathered in the hills. The streets of Basse Terre are full of puddles and beaten into mud by a succession of heavy showers. But we have escaped and been followed by the friendly sunshine all the way.

IV.

ST. EUSTATIUS.

SAILING IN COUNTRY BOATS — RUINS OF MASSIVE STONE BUILDINGS — ARTIFICIAL PROSPERITY DESTROYED BY RODNEY'S SWOOP — SUGAR PLANTATIONS ABANDONED — THE GOLDEN ROCK.

Basse Terre, St. Kitts, Jan. 1, '96.

The traveller by the little sloops that ply between the smaller islands of the West Indies, and which are the only means of communication with those which are not of importance enough to be visited by the steamers, is liable to meet with various experiences. These boats are usually of about ten tons burden, and are manned almost exclusively by negro crews, who are among the best boatmen in the world, and sail with sure confidence within a hand's breadth of depth in many of the wild storms of these tempestuous waters. The vessels range as far north as St. Thomas, and sometimes even as far south as Barbadoes, carrying cargoes of salt and country produce, and bringing supplies for the little stores. Sometimes the voyage is made under the most de-

lightful aspects, with a fresh and favoring breeze and a clear sky, and it is a keen delight to sweep through the dancing seas sparkling with white foam crests, with the lee rail awash, the sail bellying full, and the cordage singing. The helmsman sits flat on the deck, with his strong hand grasping the tiller, and his keen eye watching the course of the boat, which he guides as skilfully as an accomplished jockey does his horse. The flying fish sparkle out of the waves and glide in long, easy flight along the surface, and the sea birds wheel and cry in the life-giving air. Generally the crew, under the impulse of the rapid motion and the favoring voyage, improvise a concert, with accordeon, tambourine and triangle, and some quaint and monotonous melody, which may have had its origin in the forests of Africa, rings out over the water, and adds a strange, weird note of primitive humanity to the voice of the wind and sea. At other times it is different. There are head winds and baffling calms, in which the boat simply rocks, with slatting sails, on the sickening roll of the sea; when the sun pours down with a fiery heat, untempered by the breeze; when the crew are sulky and silent, and the shortest voyage seems interminable. This was my fortune on the first part of the voyage to Saba. We left the roadstead of St. Kitts at 3 o'clock one afternoon in a sloop belonging to Anguilo, whose captain had agreed to run me down to Saba,

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which he hoped to reach the following morning. The only other passenger was an elderly black woman, who lay upon the deck with all the immobility of an animal, the only sign of life being the occasional lifting of a skinny arm and a slight change of position. The wind was ahead, and we slowly, very slowly, beat up along the coast, taking an infinite time to pass a sentinel palm or a landmark point. Finally, at sunset, the wind fell almost to a dead calm, and we rolled idly about in the water without steerage way.

A refuge in a hard bunk of bare boards in a stifling cabin brought a night of nightmare, in which there was a constant semi-unconsciousness of the interminable roll and slat, and a sense of stifling calm and heat. In the damp, dewy morning before sunrise there was a grateful sense of coolness in the air, but it was soon dissipated as the fiery sun burned down upon the sea, which reflected and redoubled its heat. We had only reached Sandy Point some twelve miles from Basse Terre, and before us rose the green and lofty hill of St. Eustatius at about the same distance across the channel, with the misty mound of Saba on the horizon beyond. No one, who has not had the painful experience, can tell with what snail-like slowness one makes way in a light air toward an object clearly visible, and which seems so near. Time and time again the weary eyes

were raised toward the green mass with the hope of seeing some feature grow more distinct, and some sign of actual progress, and as often they fell disappointed, and the spirit nestles back into what Gen. Sherman called intense patience. The perpetually shifting sail gave no permanent shade, and the slatting boom compelled a closely sitting position on the deck. The sun became more and more "piking," to use the expressive phrase of one of the negro crew, and the heat and immobility began to assume proportions of acute discomfort. There was nothing to eat on board except yams cooked in the hot ashes of a box on deck, and the water had a temperature some little short of creating steam. Limited reasoning powers began to have an influence. It wasn't absolutely necessary that I should get to Saba on that or any other particular day. Next week or next month would answer equally well for all practical purposes, and here was St. Eustatius under the lee with green trees promising shade, and the more or less probability of a bath, a comfortable meal and a bed, which was not altogether of bare boards. The welcome order was given to make for the roadstead. The crew got out their sweeps, and by the aid of these and occasional puffs of wind, we managed to reach the harbor of Orange Town a little after noon.

As we approached the land, under the steep, high bluffs, could be seen the ruins of what were once

massive stone buildings, walls with gaping windows and piles of tumbled masonry. These were the warehouses of the merchants of St. Eustatius, in the brief period of its feverish prosperity, when it was the neutral port of the West Indies during the wars of England, France and Spain, for the possession of the Antilles, and to which all the trade, legitimate and contraband, was directed. Now they are but a quarry for any one to dismantle at will, and many of them have sunk into the sea, which has eaten into the land with its restless surge. In the roadstead, in which two and three hundred ships have been counted at a time, there are but a few boats like our own riding at anchor. The harbor master came off to inspect our papers, for these little islands under various jurisdictions, have all their custom houses, quarantines and harbor regulations, which often aid to the discomfort and delay of travel. We were not suspects in coming from an island in plain sight, and I was permitted to land. The harbor master obligingly took me into his boat, which was rowed by a stout negro with muscular arms and trousers rolled up to the knees. As we approached the beach he paused and backed water until a great roller lifted us on its chest. Then he pulled fiercely, and with a swirl and rush the boat went high up on the beach, where she was seized by the athletic arms of some boatmen, who had rushed, knee-deep, into the water, and dragged up high and dry.

Save for the custom's guard house and a few small buildings the town of St. Eustatius has retreated to the bluff, which is some 300 feet above the beach. The winding way is solidly paved with stones, a relic of former wealth and enterprise, and crosses a bridge constructed of strong and solid masonry, which spans a steep ravine, down which, in the rainy season, a foaming torrent pours. The Governor's house, over which floats the flag of Holland, occupies the centre, and around it are winding lanes, flanked with closely packed houses, some of them of solid masonry, but ruined and decayed, and others the flimsy wooden structures of a later date. At every step there are signs of ruin, of hopeless stagnation and poverty. There is no market place, and only a few negresses are to be seen in the corners with baskets of vegetables and fruit and wooden platters of fish. Black pigs roam the streets, and diminutive donkeys are seen with kegs strung to their sides carrying the water from the foot of the hill to the houses. The few shops are small and poorly furnished, and though there is activity enough nobody seems to have anything serious to do. As a matter of fact, St. Eustatius is in the last stages of decay. Its artificial prosperity was destroyed by the swoop of Rodney upon the island and his grand loot of all its money and merchandise in 1780, and in any event would not have outlasted the period of the

wars any more than that of Nassau could have survived beyond the end of the blockade running. The sugar plantations have been gradually abandoned with the depression in the industry, and now this rich and fertile island is relapsing into a wilderness. The population has shrunk to about 1500 souls, who live off the native produce with a little traffic in cattle, hides and such things as can be sold. Whether the time will ever come when American or English capitalists, seeking more profitable investments than the overcrowded manufactories shall once more look to these fertile islands, and, using improved machinery and economical methods of culture, shall revive the sugar industry, is a problem, which only the future can solve. There is little doubt that they would realize handsome returns, if they should, but if they do not, there is apparently nothing for the smaller islands but to return to the tropical wilderness, inhabited only by negroes, who live upon the fruits of the earth, and will gradually return to their native barbarism.

Just in the outskirts of the town I found a comfortable house, clean and cool, and embowered in vegetation, whose owner was willing to receive me. It is needless to say that there is no inn in Orange Town, and that the rare visitor is forced to depend upon the paid hospitality of some resident. One of the greatest luxuries ever invented by humanity is a

cool bath after a day of steaming heat, and, cooled and refreshed and in his right mind, one can wander along a country lane to a convenient tree upon the verge of the bluff, and there listen to the never ending surge rolling against its feet, follow a white sail upon the blue expanse and idly watch the green lizards that become familiar with your immobility and may even race across your feet. It is not thrilling enjoyment, but very, very grateful after such a voyage. Near by rises the massive brown tower of an ancient church, whose roof has fallen in, and whose bare rafters show like the ribs of a skeleton. The tarnished brass plate of the dial no longer marks the hours, and shrubs and prickly cacti have overgrown the yard. In its massive stone tombs, with circular roofs, which for the most part bear inscriptions dating back to the last century and before, some of them in old high Dutch, which is unintelligible to those familiar with the modern language. Thrown close beside the wall is a massive grey tombstone, bearing an inscription to the memory of Brigadier General Ogilvie of the British army, who died in 1781, Governor of St. Eustatius and its dependencies. The legend has it that when the French captured the island the succeeding year they were so embittered against his memory that they threw his monument out of the church and it has remained ever since where it fell, no one having energy or reverence

enough to restore it to its place. Of old legends and romantic history St. Eustatius is full. Everyone will tell you stories of buried treasures, which were hidden in the times of the English and French invasions, of pots full of broad Joes and pieces of eight, which have been unearthed in gardens and cellars, and there is undoubtedly more truth in them than in most of the stories of hidden treasures—the only real golden hoard of pirates being that found by Robert Louis Stevenson in Treasure Island. I saw a very curious old ring truss found in a pot of buried money, and there are still probably some such deposits in the earth, although not so many of course, as credulous tradition would believe. Then there are more or less authentic stories of pirates and privateers, who were pirates only in name, and who made their headquarters in this port, with whose merchants they established profitable and friendly relations. The last pirate of the Spanish Main, a schooner called Las Damas Argentinas, was captured in this port in 1828, after having plundered an English brig, by a British man-of-war, and the crew taken to St. Kitts, where twenty-eight of them were duly hanged with short shrift and sure cord.

But the great event in the history of St. Eustatius, to which every inhabitant refers with longing and grief, was the famous descent of Admiral Sir George Rodney, in 1780. When the war with the American

colonies broke out, this neutral island was not only the headquarters of the American privateers, who swarmed in these waters, but the entreport of all the great trade which desired to avoid confiscation and capture. Commercial intercourse had, of course, been forbidden with the revolted colonies, but the West India planters were dependent upon them for their supplies of meal, bacon and salt fish to feed their slaves, and so an immense trade sprang up under the shelter of Dutch neutrality. English merchants established themselves here as well as those of other nations, and there was a rich colony of Jews, the ruins of whose synagogue are still standing, but who have since entirely abandoned the impoverished island. The island was called the Golden Rock, and money was handed about in bucketfulls. The inhabitants naturally sympathized strongly with the revolted colonies, and it is a fact, which every resident will impress upon the visitor from the United States, that the island government was the first to salute the American flag, for which Governor Graaf had some difficulty with Rodney previous to the capture of the island. Upon some pretext or other, the real motive probably being a desire for plunder, England declared war against Holland, and the news was transmitted to Rodney. It was the opportunity which he had been longing for. He had probably long regarded St. Eustatius as practically an enemy's port,

which did uncalculable damage to the British cause by supplying the rebels with means and money to carry on their struggle, and he was doubtless equally willing to punish the British merchants, who were trading under a neutral flag, to the advantage of the enemy. But the loot, also, was very tempting. Rodney, although he won the greatest sea fight in English history up to the time of Trafalgar, was not a generous man like Nelson. He always had a keen eye and a greedy hand for prize money, and St. Eustatius promised enough to free him from his debts and make him rich forever. He swooped down upon it with his fleet, and there was, of course, nothing to do but to surrender. Then ensued such a scene of plunder as had probably never been witnessed since the capture of Panama by the Buccaneers. All the goods in the warehouses were seized, regardless of the nationality of their owners, and the money looted from the banks and tills and the private houses. For weeks there was a grand auction of all kinds of goods, which were sold to everyone except their former owners, and scattered in every direction. In spite of the almost nominal prices, the amount of plunder reached the enormous sum of three million pounds sterling. Among the popular legends of the loot is that some of the people endeavored to hide their hoards of gold in coffins over which they held solemn obsequies, and conveyed to the tomb. Rod-

ney became suspicious of the multitude of funerals in a time when there was no pestilence, and ordered the coffins to be opened, which added their contents to his pile of plunder. In his high-handed greed he paid no attention to the claims of English subjects to the ownership of goods, and was even accused by his gallant subordinate, Sir Samuel Hood, of hiding a portion of the plunder in his flag-ship, which he never accounted for. But Hood and Rodney were not on good terms, and it is difficult to believe that so gallant a sailor was guilty of petty crime. It is some satisfaction to know that his enormous loot brought very little substantial wealth to Rodney. He was pursued in the Admiralty courts by the British merchants, whose goods he had seized, and made to refund such large sums that he died in embarrassed circumstances in spite of the pension of £2000 a year, which he received for his subsequent great victory over De Grasse. Such was the event on which all the history of St. Eustatius hinges, and is referred to as a calamity, like a hurricane or earthquake, which ended a golden age. But it is obvious that the artifical prosperity of St. Eustatius could not have outlasted the conditions of war, and that Rodney's raid simply anticipated the result of time. Since that era its course has been steadily downward, until now no profitable industry exists, and it simply vegetates in its circle of summer seas.

It is a beautiful as well as a fertile island. A mountain between two and three thousand feet high rises at the southern end, and at its summit is the perfectly rounded bowl of the extinct crater, which formed it. Beautifully undulating hills occupy the rest of the country, and rich valleys invite cultivation. Ruins of sugar houses are seen here and there, and fields where the cane waved are grown up with tropical vegetation. The bold shores are beaten with the everlasting surge of the sea, and the trade winds sweep across it with life-giving air. It might be a garden of productiveness instead of a neglected wilderness, and perhaps it may be again in a future day. Meanwhile, the philosopher may speculate whether the easy, careless life of the negro population, to whom it has fallen, may not be worth more in the sum of happiness than all the strife and struggle for the pursuit of wealth and the creation of artificial wants. At least under the shade of a tree, in the midst of tropical leaf and flower, and in the sound of the murmuring voice of the restful sea, the tranquil mind has not much doubt as to its personal preference, at least for the time being.

V.

AN ISLAND EYRIE.

The Dutch island of Saba, one of the Leeward group of the West Indies, is one of the most peculiar spots in the civilized world, and is habited by almost as peculiar a people. It lies eighteen miles north of the island of St. Eustatius, and rises like a misty green cone out of the turquoise waters of the sea. Its only access is by means of the country boats, usually sloops of about ten tons burden, which ply between the islands with loads of salt, country produce, and supplies for the little stores. The West India negroes are born boatmen, and it is a lesson in sailing to travel by one of these crafts. Our crew numbered seven, including the captain, all little active young fellows, bare-footed, and with trousers rolled up to the knee. As we got under way in the afternoon in the roadstead of St. Eustatius, there was as much noise as in starting a full-rigged ship. Every one was shouting or laughing or echoing the orders of the captain to let her pull off and clear the bowsprit of the Little Laurie or to keep her full, and it was a pleasure to see the easy grace and activity of the men, as they moved about the heeling craft, or

climbed the shrouds, hand over hand, without ratlines. Their faces had the happy carelessness of animal life, and perpetual good humor shone in their bright eyes and glittering teeth. There is a charm in the African face, when it is not sullen and savage, entirely independent of the mould of the features, when it is associated with the free and natural life of the sea and woods, and there were some of our crew who had all the grace of active animals in their expression and motions. The breeze was fresh and steady and, as we swept out into the open sea sparkling and rippling with light foam crests the cordage sang and the lee gunwale was often awash. The captain abandoned the helm to one of the crew, who sat flat on the deck with the tiller in his strong hands, and guided the boat as skillfully as an accomplished jockey does his horse. The captain produced a gorgeous accordion from the cabin, and seated himself on the hatch, while two others brought out rude tambourines, and a fourth a triangle. They commenced with a rude dance measure with a few strongly accented notes, such as might have been heard in an African forest, the performers on the tambourine showing marvellous ease and skill in the alternate touches of their palms and knuckles, and the triangle sharply accenting the notes. It set two of the crew to dancing on the reeling deck with the African hitchings of their haunches and the patting

of their hands. Then they broke out into an interminable song, whose chorus was

"I wish I was in Demarara 'r'r
The place where I was born."

For all the passage the concert was kept up without flagging, the captain all the while taking in the course of the boat with keen glances and occasionally shouting an order to him to trim sheet or keep her full. Meanwhile the sea sparked in the sunlight, and the fresh breeze blew with light and life. Silver flying fish darted from the sea and swept along the surface in glittering flight. A pelican flew along with the heavy beat of its laboring wings, or plunged with a splash into the water for a fish. A white gull swept around with its wild cry.

As the sun was sinking yellow as gold in the soft, fleecy sky, we drew near to Saba. Its mossy walls rose sheer up two thousand feet from the sea, which beat with a dull roar and a circle of white foam at its feet. There was none of the soft green that clothes the less rugged West Indian islands, and none of the feathery palms to show their slender stems and feathery tops against the sky line. On the contrary the steep rocks showed bare and brown, and the scanty vegetation gave it more the aspect of some lonely island of the Hebrides than of the tropic seas. A heavy white cloud hung upon its summit, and just

below it, so that it was almost touched by the vapor, was a nest of little red-roofed houses in an eyrie of the rock. This was St. John, one of the towns of this strange island. As we passed along under the cliffs westward in the level glare of the setting sun, two or three boats were seen anchored off shore, and finally we opened out a narrow crevice in the rocks up which there was a narrow and winding pathway. There was much hallooing to a uniformed negro policeman in front of a small wooden guard house, and on the promise of a shilling an urchin darted up the path like a goat to notify the harbor master of the rare event of a passenger desiring to land at Saba. In due time he appeared in the shape of a tall bearded man, accompanied by a crew of wild-eyed, athletic negroes. They dragged a boat down the shingly beach, and watching the chance of a strong refluent wave pushed off and were soon alongside. A few strokes of the oars and a pull up the beach and the landing was accomplished.

The sun was set, but a clear half-moon was shining in the sky. In the deep walks of the ravine there was a heavy shadow, and the ascent of the nine hundred feet of the "Ladder" to the crater had to be made in obscurity. The harbor master obligingly lent me his little sure-footed pony, who commenced to climb the steep steps with all the agility of a goat. The ascent went on prosperously for awhile, until at

a very high step there was a sudden oscillation in the saddle, a very brief sensation of falling, and the whack of a solid skull against a still more solid rock. After that the climb was made on foot, with occasional pauses on a friendly boulder to pant, and the help of a stout negro arm up the steepest places. At length we emerged into the hollow of what was once the crater of the volcano, which created Saba, a veritable cup surrounded by steep hills a thousand feet high. It was bathed in the soft moonlight and on its level bowl was a cluster of white houses with red roofs. In one of these, neat with Dutch propriety, with rooms that were half verandas with their many windows and green jalousies, the weary traveller was received with impressive kindness and welcome. After a long cool bath and supper the monotonous chant of the tree frogs sang him to sleep.

The island of Saba, the summit of whose cone is twenty-two hundred feet above the level of the sea, was first settled by the Dutch, in the days when their adventurous half moon galleys pushed out over the seas in search of lands of spices and sugar, and has remained in their possession ever since, except for a brief period when Holland was entrained into the vortex of the Napoleonic war, and it was taken possession of by the English. One can imagine what courage it took for the early navigators to coast around the shores of this forbidding rock in search

of an opening and to climb the steep ravine into the unknown interior, and still more hardy must have been those who first determined to make a home in its silence and isolation. There are no harbors to the island, nothing but the open seas sweeping the rocks, and at the approach of storms the vessels must run for the open seas, or incur the risk of being smashed against the frowning shore. For days and days the waves beat so heavily against the shore that no boat can be launched and live, and the islanders are shut out from all communication with the outer world as much as if they lived in another planet. The present number of inhabitants is about three thousand, about two-fifths of whom are negroes. The two races are much more distinct than in the other West Indian islands, the blacks being black and the whites, white. There is also less of the caste distinction than is visible elsewhere, and the negroes have an air of vigor and manhood suited to their independent and primitive life. It is a pleasure to see their vigorous and athletic forms, and to watch the easy and graceful movements of their limbs of steel and sinews of catgut, as they climb the steep ladder with great boxes on their heads that would weigh down an ordinary man on level ground. It has been said that two of them will carry on their heads down to the shore a boat built in the crater weighing two hundred and fifty pounds, and there is

ocular demonstration that they have borne a piano safe and sound up the ascent. The whites are now mostly of English descent, very few of the old Dutch families remaining, although traces of their ways and manners still subsist among the people. They are all born sailors, and as in Nantucket in the old days, all the adventurous young manhood seeks a field for labor and adventure upon the ocean. Saba captains and Saba sailors man the best-handled vessels in the West Indies, and are found in American and English vessels of the best quality. Like the Nantucketer they have a strong affection for their native island, and generally return there in their declining years to live on the modest savings of their career of adventure. Some of them, like my host, Captain Heliger, have commanded great ships, and seen the world in all its aspects. They can charm the writer with strange tales of adventure, of Nassau in the palmy days of blockade running, when gold was carried about the streets in buckets, of voyages up the Essequibo and other mysterious rivers of Guiana, of hurricanes and water-spouts in the Caribbean seas, and wintry storms off Cape Horn, and after all that life of achievement and activity they are content to pass their days in this tranquil haven in the little lakes of a toy estate and the small gossip of the neighborhood. Many of the young men make voyages of thousands of miles to spend the

Christmas holidays at home, or perhaps to be married, and, after a few weeks, to leave their wives for an absence of three or four years upon the seas.

The island literally lives upon the earnings of the men who labor in far distant lands and seas, for its steep declivities produce no sugar, and its only crops are fruits and vegetables of which every other island grows a superfluity. There is a rich sulphur mine on the westward side of the island, which was once very profitable, but the lease has fallen into litigation, and it is not being worked. Nevertheless, in spite of the lack of visible means of support, the people of Saba are apparently much more prosperous and thrifty than those of most of the West Indian islands. Their houses are all neat and freshly painted, supplied with comfortable furniture, which is sometimes of rich and massive antiquity, and there is an air of thrift and comfort about all the ways and manners of the people. If there is no wealth there is also no poverty, at least which is apparent, and no hand is stretched forth in beggary, as is so often the case in other West India islands. All the land that it is possible to reach with the plough or even with the hoe is cultivated, and on hillsides as steep as the roof of a house, there are furrows of green planted with sweet potatoes and yams. The people, too, are more vigorous and healthy, and bear more trace of their northern blood than in the lower lying islands.

Ruddy cheeks are not uncommon among both men and women, and many of the children are charming with rosy faces, fair hair and blue eyes. A prolonged old age is very common and venerable patriarchs are seen whose years are well toward the century mark, and who are still hale and vigorous. Naturally most of the people are related to each other by some tie of consanguinity, and the population to a great extent may be considered as one large family in which the joys and sorrows are common to all.

In the morning the scene is charming. The sun, though long risen, is still behind the shoulder of the hill, and only a softened light fills the valley. The thickly clustered houses of the village are grouped around the larger mansion of the governor, from whose flagstaff floats the tri-colored pennon of Holland. The people are busy in their gardens or about their houses, and in the deep lanes between the massive stone walls negroes are carrying baskets and loads of vegetables on their heads. In a great arched stone oven a housewife is baking her week's supply of bread. The figure of the governor or the doctor is seen galloping up a steep lane with a negro groom hanging on to the tail of his pony. Far up the steep hillside at the edge of the brush are negroes gathering wood or boys at play, whose shouts echo down the valley. A gun on the opposite side rings out with a magnified sound and prolonged reverberation. It

is perhaps some hunter in pursuit of the wild goats, which are to be found in the mountain. Above the highest hill-top and in the full glow of the sunlight sweeps some great sea-hawk, hardly more than a brown speck in the heavens. Amid the flowery border of the verandah the brilliant humming birds are busy in the deep scarlet blossoms of the hibiscus, and other brown birds with a sweet chirping note are flitting here and there. All who pass gaze interestedly, but not impertinently, at the rare sight of a stranger. As the hours wear on the white convolvulus opens, one by one; the full glare of the sun steeps in the valley, and the welcome shade of the verandah grows deeper. The hours are passed in slow, drifting talk of island life, of adventure at sea, and occasional epochs of skillfully concocted beverages, with flavors of fresh lime and other fascinating and strange ingredients. It is such peace and tranquillity out of the world, such rest and lotus eating, as could only be enjoyed in this charming island, and earned by a struggle up the steps of the Ladder. Evening comes on. At four o'clock the sun is hidden behind the rim of the opposite mountains, and, while the shade has fallen upon the valley, the light patches of cloud above the summit shine with the brilliant golden glow of day. A walk down to the gap, of which there are two in the ascent of the hills, one at the top of the ladder, and one at the top of a still steeper and

more difficult ascent, brings you to the edge of the ocean, which lies before you in an immense blue plain, and from which comes the soft, sea-scented refreshing wind. Sheer below, it wrinkles against the rocks, but no sound of its murmurs reaches the ear.

Upon this eyrie was told the story of the last of the pirates of the Spanish Main which has its connection with Saba, and is a vital tradition among its older people.

In the middle of August, 1828, an English brig, whose name had been painted out on the stern, but which could be still made out as the Caraboo, anchored at Saba. The crew of eight, who were on board, abandoned her, and, taking a small boat, sailed for the island of St. Barts. Notice was sent to the Dutch commandant of St. Eustatius that the brig, which apparently had been plundered, had been abandoned at Saba, and she was taken to the roadstead of Orangetown, where the president of the island and two prominent merchants named Martin, were suspiciously active in removing the remaining packages, claiming that she was derelict and that they were entitled to salvage. The British commandant at St. Kitts, the island next south of St Eustatius, heard of the circumstances, and was convinced that the brig had been taken and plundered by pirates. He sent his aide-de-camp to St. Eustatius with a de-

mand for her surrender, which, after some delay and tergiversation, was granted. St. Eustatius had been from the early years of its history a hot-bed for pirates and privateers, in reality little better, although sailing under various doubtful commissions from Buenos Ayres, Colombia, and other South American republics, and its officials and principal merchants were more than suspected of having a share in the profits of the trade. The British mail-packet Valorous, which, like her class in those days, was armed, was sent down from St. Kitts to protect the Caraboo on her voyage up, and prevent her from being cut out by any of the suspicious looking craft, which were seen hovering in the channel between the islands. Shortly afterward, the British sloop-of-war, Victor, arrived at St. Kitts, and was sent to Saba and St. Eustatius to investigate the case. Her captain found that not only had the Caraboo been taken and plundered by pirates, but by skillful questioning, obtained a description of a schooner, calling herself a Buenos Ayres privateer, which had been frequently seen in St. Eustatius, and was suspected of having committed the crime. On the return, in the channel between St. Eustatius and St. Kitts, the Victor came upon a schooner bearing the appearance of the suspected vessel. She fired a gun to bring her to, but the schooner crowded all sail to escape. The Victor had the heels of her, and as she rounded to,

to deliver a broadside, the schooner flew Dutch colors, which were respected and she was allowed to make her way to the roadstead of St. Eustatius. When there, she hoisted Buenos Ayres colors and was taken possession of by a boat's crew of the Victor. She bore the name of Las Damas Argentinas, and the captain exhibited a commission as a letter of marque from the president of Buenos Ayres. He was taken on board the Victor and was probably subjected to a rather forcible cross-examination, for he admitted that he had captured the Caraboo, but claimed that she had a Portuguese register, which was absurd on the face of it, as the brig was undoubtedly British and would have exposed herself to needless risk by sailing under false papers. The brig was taken to St. Kitts, and it was there learned that she originally hailed from Baltimore, and was named the Bolivar. She sailed for St. Thomas under American colors and was there fitted out as a privateer, under a commission from Buenos Ayres, which had probably been made out in blank, and sold to the first customer. The captain's name was Joseph Loynan Buyran, and he hailed from island of Majorica. The crew were mostly Spaniards and Portuguese, with a few Americans and Engglish aboard. They had had a successful cruise, having captured an American brig, the Peru, of Nantucket, a Spanish and a Portuguese ship, and a

Portuguese felucca, which were taken to St. Eustatius and plundered, and then sunk; the cargoes being sent to St. Thomas and sold. Whether the Baltimore owners shared a profit in the voyage is not known. The prisoners were arraigned before a court consisting of five commissioners and a jury of the inhabitants of St. Kitts. Henry Harrison, the quartermaster, and Elisa Merriman, a seaman, were admitted as king's evidence. They testified that the schooner fell in with the Caraboo off Gibraltar, and Captain Cook was thunderstruck when informed that his vessel was a prize. He and his crew were taken on board the schooner, but not subjected to any violence or personal plundering. Captain Buyran was evidently a somewhat gentlemanly pirate. Off Lazarote, one of the Canary islands, the captured crew were put into a heavily laden boat, and sent to make their way on shore. As an evidence of his gentlemanly feeling Captain Buyran presented Captain Cook with the sum of $20 as some compensation for the loss of his cargo valued at $28,000. The men in the over-laden boat had great difficulty in making their way to land, and would hardly have done so but for the people on shore, who saw their labored progress and went out to their assistance.

Captain Buyran asked to be tried separately and his request was granted. He defended himself by

the production of his commission as a privateer, and claimed that his gift of $20 to Captain Cook was a proof that he was no pirate. "Pirates," he said, "did not do such things," which on the whole was a reflection on the memory of Captain Roberts, and others of the more generous of the "gentlemen of fortune," who had been known to give a vessel they did not want to the unfortunate commander of one which they did, and hand over to him a share of his own provisions. In spite of this plea Captain Buyran was duly convicted of piracy upon the high seas and sentenced to be hanged. Ninety of his crew were summarily convicted and sentenced the next day. Honorio Jose, the Portuguese cook, was acquitted on his evidence that he had been forced to serve against his will, and Pepe Gonzaley, a Spanish boy, on account of his youth and unresponsibility. Peter Cooper, a lieutenant of the schooner, and William Ogle, the cabin-boy, were shown to have protested against the capture of the Caraboo, and recommended to mercy. Neile McNeill, an American, was sick during the voyage, and had taken no part in its work. He was a smith and had been at work at St. Thomas, when he had got into debt, and as the Danish law allows imprisonment for debt, he had shipped and taken the advance pay to satisfy his creditors. As soon as he found out the character of the vessel he either fell sick or shammed sickness to escape re-

sponsibility. It would not appear that he was at all culpable, but he and five others, who had been shipped at the Canary island after the capture of the brig and were guiltless of any act of piracy, were only acquitted on the condition that they would serve for five years on a British man-of-war.

One of the notable characters among the pirate's crew was an American named Alfred Cooper, who served as a lieutenant on the schooner. He was one of that singular type of adventurers and desperadoes, whom an untameable restlessness and recklessness drive out into the world, and whose careers contain more extraordinary incidents than the most extravagant romancer would dare to invent. They are still to be found in the waste places of the earth, in the South seas, on the western frontier, or wherever there is strife and adventure, and their careers are sometimes marvellous in the contrasts between their birth and up-bringing and their lives and deaths. More than one could say in the language of the old Scottish ballad:

"O! little did my mammy ken
The day she cradled me,
The land I was to travel in,
The death I was to dee."

This Cooper had been to the East Indies in his youth, and in some freak of waywardness or in some perilous adventure among the infidels, had become a

Mohammedan and stuck to his new faith. While his companions weakened at the prospect of death, and sought comfort and consolation in the hopes and promises of the minister, who visited them in their cells, Cooper remained sullenly obdurate and defiantly declared himself a believer in the Koran. The captain was very indignant at the conduct of the quartermaster, Harrison, who had turned king's evidence, and expressed the hope that, although he had escaped punishment on earth, he would find it in hell, but being informed by the clergyman that his one chance of salvation depended upon a better frame of mind, he forgave him, doubtless with a mental reservation that things would have been different if the clutch of the law had not been quite so potent.

The first batch of the prisoners, including the captain, were executed the second day after the trial. They were taken out of the jail and placed in a cart, which was escorted in front and rear by detachments of troops from the garrison and the island militia. The place of execution was a level green meadow at the east of the town, at the end of the row of fishermen's huts, which stretched along the beach. It is surrounded by an amphitheatre of hills and faces the blue waters of the bay. As the procession started the big gun of the pirate schooner, which was anchored in front of the place of execu-

tion, was fired with solemn boom at minute intervals, and continued until all was over. The broadside of the Victor was trained on the scene, and her crew were in the boats. The crowd were hushed and nothing was heard but the loud prayers of the criminals and the booming of the heavy gun until the drop fell and the row of human beings hung limp in the sunshine. When Cooper came to be executed the following day, true to his desperate character, he fought the executioner, who was a gigantic and savage negro, who had been pardoned for some crime, on condition that he would perform the office. The negro swore at his victim, while he was dragging him to the drop, and the scene was sickening. Thus ended the last of the pirates of the Spanish Main, and, although the proceedings, to our view, savor somewhat of summary and rough and ready promptness, there is no doubt that substantial justice was done. Thereafter there were no more Buenos Ayrean privateers haunting the Antilles. The cook, Honorio Jose, lived for a long time in Basse Terre, becoming demented in his old age, and wandering about the streets singing fragments of songs, and living upon charity. The descendants of the boy, Pepe Gonzaley, are still living in the island.

My visit to Saba was at Christmas time. At four o'clock, in the still, dark morning, whose air was burdened and sweetened with the heavy scent of

tropic flowers, young voices were heard singing carols in the street, as if it were in an English village. The celebration of the day was entirely decorous in Saba, and there was none of that masquerading, drumming, parading and "gumbic" dancing, which, in other West Indian islands, fills the streets with barbaric noise and merriment during the entire week from Christmas to New Year's day. The people, neatly dressed, wended their way decorously to the pretty little English church, which was profusely decorated with flowers and palms which would have cost a fortune in a colder land, but which were here the free gift of nature. The whites and blacks sat together without distinction, and colored young ladies sang in the choir beside their fairer sisters. The sermon was such as might have been heard in an English village church, and the only slight surprise was the invocation in behalf of our sovereign and gracious lady, Wilhelmina, instead of Victoria, whose name has come to seem a part of the service.

One of the many original characters of Saba is old Jubilee, a negro, a haunter of the woods and solitary places by an instinct of nature like an Indian. He was born a slave on the island of St. Barts, and had been a butler in the house of a gentleman, where he had doubtless learned his polite and deferential manners. But after emancipation he had betaken

himself to the solitude of the Saba hills, which he haunted like a wild animal. He was sixty-eight years of age, but still capable of climbing to the summits of the highest and steepest hills. In his sharp eyes was the keenness and quickness of vision of a wood-bird, and his quiet movements had all the ease of one to whom the tangled woodland was an open path. His words were few, but the kindly smile of his weather-worn face was companionship. He was accompanied by a little brown dog, with the sharp muzzle, the keen eyes, and the cocked ears of a fox. He was friendly to the stranger, but all his eyes and ears were given to his master with a dumb affection and intelligence touching to see. They were companions, and doubtless had a closer understanding than many human beings, whose touch of comprehension is so dulled with the dust of conventional speech. The woods of Saba are not the profuse and tangled growth of the lower-lying islands, but many of the tropical trees and shrubs grow in them, like the lemon and coffee trees, and the ferns, if not gigantic, are delicate and beautiful. All the rare plants Jubilee knew and detected on the instant, as well as the roots and simples of savage medicine, and he would unearth with the point of his stick some point of rock showing glittering quartz or some strange conglomerate of lava fusions, whose rarity he knew, but of whose value he was ignorant, al-

though hopefully credulous that it might contain some precious mineral. There are no poisonous snakes in Saba like the terrible *fer de lance* of Martinique and St. Lucia, and the coral snake of Trinidad, and one wanders in the woods without fear of disturbing anything more dangerous than a scuttling lizard. The little birds are mostly silent, or only give faint chirping notes like dwellers in solitary places oppressed by the silence. There are many beautiful and delicate flowers in Saba, some that stream over the walls in blue and white, and others that hide shyly under the leaves, and only show when a stray glint of sunshine penetrates the branches and illuminates them to a crimson spark. At length, after a climb in no way entitled to rank among feats of mountaineering, but which makes the muscles quiver and the lungs pant, one arrives at a summit which commands a view of the vast ocean. The sensation of height is greater than that on many a loftier peak, for being in the infiniteness of the azure and surrounded by the infinite sea. The fresh wind blows, tempering the heat of the golden sunshine. Nothing is visible on the horizon but the hill of St. Eustatius, and the eye vainly searches in the blue distance for the white spot of a sail. It is all airy height and infinite vastness.

Not all the inhabitants of Saba live in the crater. There are clusters of cottages perched here and

there in eyries of the hills, and on the windward side, so-called, from the steady prevalence of the trade winds, there is a considerable village perched on a steep declivity. Here the winds blow, and when the hurricanes rage it must seem to all but the hardened dweller on the rocks that the slight habitation must be swept off into the air. But here they live and remain, apparently as fast as limpets to a rock. In the crater the people are sheltered from the hurricanes, except when they sweep in through one gap, and then, circling round in their revolving course, penetrate by the other, but at their worst they are nothing like the tempests to which those on the windward side are exposed.

If a voyage by boat in the Caribbean sea by day is charming, by night, in pleasant weather, it is magic. The men, like animals, go to sleep at sunset. They lie stretched across the hatch or about the deck, face downward, or on their backs, sleeping profoundly. Only the barefooted steersman sets vigilant at the tiller. The fresh breeze fills the sail, and the rush of the water so near has a sound of whispering companionship. The great stars sparkle in the heaven twice as large and twice as brilliant as in the colder and greyer skies, while the moon now pours forth a flood of splendor and now veils her face in a floating wreath of translucent vapor. Mile after mile we slide through the gently heaving sea,

until at length we begin to coast the darkly wooded shores of St. Kitts, whose lofty hills are cut sharp against the sky. Off Sandy Point we are hailed by the coast-guard boat, and made to heave to. All is bustle and excitement as the sleeping crew spring to their feet and bellow and bawl as the guard boat is pulled along side. We have no freight but a bundle of dried goat skins, and, after a rummage in the hold, are allowed to pass on. It is one of the vexations of West India travel that these little islands of various jurisdictions have all their custom-houses, and quarantines, and their harbor regulations, which do not permit landing after sunset without special trouble. As we sail along, almost in the shadow of the shore, lights twinkle here and there in the cabins, and the monotonous thump, thump of a negro drum and the livelier beat and roll of a tambourine gives a weird note of strangeness to the scene of woods and tropic sea. At length the lights of the vessels in the roadstead of St. Kitts twinkle in the distance and the colored beacon on the pier shines like a red spark. We whistle to revive the lagging wind, and at length down goes the anchor in the still waters and the sails are furled.

VII.

NEVIS.

IN A PALM GROVE—A LITTLE JOURNEY INTO GINGER LAND—DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE NEGRO AND MIXED RACES—AN OLD PLANTATION DANCE—RUDE AFRICAN MELODIES.

Basse Terre, St. Kitts, January 11, 1896.

One of the pleasantest spots in the little island of Nevis is the palm grove on the beach beside the town. At early dawn there is a dewy freshness in the air, which is most delightful. The wide stretch of the sea before you is soft and gray, with a vapory light, and faint curls of mist rest upon its surface. The long, slow surges roll up the sand with a dull and melancholy roar, as if in the lassitude of their strength. The slender trunks of the palms rise straight and tall and gray, and the great leaves of their umbrella tops rustle in the faint wind with a voice which is not like the soft sighing of the pines, but louder and more accentuated, but still not harsh, and full of strange whisperings and unknown tropical speech.

The people are already astir. About the negro

cabins in the grove the women are busy over their fires, whose smoke rises in the air and touches the nostril with a pleasant, acrid smell, as of strange woods and leaves. The breakfast of yams and fried fish will soon be ready. An old woman comes out leaning heavily on a staff and extends a skinny hand with a request for a penny to buy bread, which she evidently needs, for her days of active work have long been over. Children gather about to stare with smiling wonderment at the strange visitor. Men come down with the heavy burdens of nets on their shoulders, which they stretch in long rows on the poles to dry. A young negro lad goes dashing by on a fiery young horse, which he is taking down for its morning bath. He is without a saddle, but clings easily to the animal, which is furious with vigor and activity, and his white teeth shine with enjoyment as the beast darts past and ploughs up the firm sand with his hoofs in a mad career away along the crescent shore. The waves take on a darker shade and sparkle in the warmer light. Some great fish splashes up the surface with a heavy plunge, and far off on the horizon there is a spiral of vapor, where a whale is disporting his huge hulk in the sea. A boat comes pulling in, whose crew have been out to the fish traps, and are bringing in their catch. As it touches the beach they spring barelegged into the surf and drag it high up on the sand. Its bottom is

full of fish of all strange shapes and colors, long, slender snake-like fish with sharp snouts, dumpy red ones, and others blue, green and orange, and all the colors of the rainbow, with huge bellies and grotesque shapes as strange as their colors. The boat is soon surrounded with eager women, who come trooping through the grove with baskets or wooden platters on their heads, who eagerly chaffer with much noise and chattering for the supply, which they will take home to the market. A few pence will fill the basket or the platter, and a breakfast can be bought for a copper or even a half penny. Fish is almost the exclusive diet of the poor people, and with a baked yam and sugar cane to gnaw the negro keeps fat and happy. Meanwhile the sun has risen at your back and begins to send its level spears of light under the trees and search out the shadows. The night vapors have vanished from the sea, and the waters are now deeply blue and sparkling in the sunshine. The line of the woods sweeps darkly green around the crescent of the shore to the point, where there are the ruins of the old fort, now dismantled and grass-grown, which once watched like a sentinel over the safety of the island against some buccaneering raid or Spanish or French surprise. You can walk for miles along the firm sand of the beach, listening to the roar of the ocean, and absorbing the sweet air of the tropics, until the sun gets

high enough to reach your unprotected head, and then your unethereal nature will remind you that it is time to think of a West Indian breakfast.

On the windward side of Nevis, which is a permanent point on all these islands on account of the steady current of the trade winds, is the settlement called Ginger Land, why, no one seems to know. The road leads past the old stone hotel and hot bath which once made Nevis the Saratoga of the West Indies, and is a gradual ascent until the windward declivity is reached. On the left is the lofty, conical mountain, which dominates the island from its centre, and whose darkly green sides slope up to a sharp peak on whose summit there is always a wreath of white cloud. On either side are fields, some waving and rustling with thick cane, and others bare and black, in which men and women are working with heavy hoes. At one spot across the fields and crowning a ridge is a long row of the beautiful cabbage palms, showing their slender stems and feathery tops against the darker green of the mountain side. At a turn in the road we come upon the ruins of a great stone mansion, bare and desolate, with its eyeless windows boarded up. On the hill behind it rises the tower of the windmill, still intact, with its huge arms motionless in the air. The sugar-boiling house is a thorough ruin with the roof fallen in, but one curious stone building attracts the attention. Narrow slits in the

walls scarcely more than inch wide serve as windows, and in the semi-darkness of the interior it seems a stone cell in which refractory slaves may have been thrust, waiting for their turn at the whipping post in the morning. It may have been only a toolhouse, but it looks marvelously like a prison, and the stories of the discipline on the slave estates by no means forbid the conjecture. A great square stone tank sunk in the ground is still full of water, but the house and buildings are empty and abandoned. Some of the fields are grown up, but others are being cultivated in small patches by the negroes, whose huts and cabins are scattered about. In Nevis, more than in many of the islands, the negroes have acquired little pieces of ground of their own from the abandoned plantations, which they cultivate. Their huts, too, are more neat and better kept than in other islands, and one sometimes sees a flower garden embowered with roses and other brilliant blossoms, showing signs of a taste rare among the negro population. Along the road were women and men trudging to and from town with burdens on their heads, and now and then a man on horseback, or bestriding a donkey so diminutive that he had to lift his feet to keep them from dragging on the ground. All were respectful, the women said their soft "Good m-a-a-ning, sir," and the men touched their hats.

At length the road began to descend, and the rows of cabins to thicken along the roadside. There were little shops where the shoemaker was seen at his last and the smith welding a shoe at his forge. There were little groceries and little bake shops, so tiny as to have barely room for the counter. By the roadside was the rude and ugly Wesleyan chapel, and farther on a large schoolhouse with a multitude of children on the benches under the supervision of a magisterial-looking black man. At the end of the settlement was the large and quaint-looking Angelical church, with a neglected grave-yard about it, and marble tablets on the inner walls expressing the virtues of departed parishioners. From here was a magnificent panorama of the sea, blue and sparkling in the sunshine, with Rotunda Rock, one of the many curious islets of these waters, rising dome-like from the surface, and the island of Monserrat lying like a misty cloud on the horizon. The steady trade wind blew and stirred among the trees, and swept a delightful coolness across the cheeks.

The population of Ginger Land is now almost entirely black, not colored, for it is always important to recognize this distinction in the West Indies between the negro and mixed races. Nevertheless, it was colonized in the old days by a colony of Shakers, whose white representatives have now entirely disappeared. The religion, however, took a firm hold

in the community, and although its tenets have perhaps entirely vanished, or exist only in some strange travesty, the habits of worship in dancing with an added African fervor, still persist, in spite of the efforts of the Angelican and Wesleyan clergymen to eradicate them. It is a strange survival, much more so than the Obeah worship, which was naturally transmitted from Africa, and is adapted to the negro character even under the varnish of education, which some of them have. Obeah is still practiced, to a very considerable extent, in Nevis, although not under such revolting forms as in Hayti, and there are many old women and old men who support themselves by preying upon the credulity of the country people. It is strictly prohibited by law, but maleficent charms, philters and medicines are sold without any particular secrecy, and the rheumatic negro has much more faith in the incantation of some Obeah man, who draws pieces of glass and lizards from the painful limb, than in the prescriptions of the regular doctor. A man who should find a cock's head before his door, or a dead lizard in a bottle, would be surely convinced that he was bewitched, and might even die under the influence of the possession as certainly as he had previously been cured from some disease under the influence of his faith in the potency of an Obeah charm.

It is now somewhat difficult to obtain a sight of one

of the old-time plantation dances, such as were practiced in the slave days, and whose originals are still to be seen on the banks of the Congo. The younger people have adopted the fashionable quadrille and waltz, and, although they dance them at times with a strong African flavor, they preserve the movements and measures of the ball-room. It is only in the remote country districts that the people sometimes gather in the evening and indulge in one of the ancient dances to the music of the drum and tambourines, and the chorus of "Baudoula, Baudoula," or "Rooma, little boy, rooma till the morning." One such event took place at a collection of huts on an abandoned plantation in Nevis, which I was privileged to witness through the influence of my negro guide and factotum.

It was a moonless night, and although the skies were thickly covered with bright constellations, they did not afford light enough to illuminate the heavy shadows of the tropical night. The guide carried a lantern, whose light flashed and quivered over the green bushes, and showed the stumps and stones after you had stumbled over them. It is quite a stiffish climb for a mile or two along narrow and little-used paths among the brushwood. The tree-frogs kept up their shrill and noisy chant on every side, and there was occasionally a strange scattering in the bushes, as though nocturnal rat or snake had

been disturbed by the footsteps. At length there was the sign of the red light of a fire in a nook in the hillside, and the monotonous sound of a drum was heard in the still air.

The collection of huts, some four or five in number, was grouped around a silk cotton tree, whose gnarled branches covered an immense area. Under this and illuminating its brown trunk with flashes of light was a bright fire made of dried cane and leaves, not for heat, but for illumination. The musicians were seated in the semi-darkness of the shade, and were four in number, an old man who played with his fingers on the head of a drum constructed from a hollow tree, two men with tambourines and a small boy with a triangle. They had been merely practicing before our arrival, and the dance had not commenced. On the news of the advent of the white visitor the men and women and a group of children of all ages gathered about him, and looked at him with kindly curiosity and good humor. They were evidently flattered with the idea that a stranger should want to see them dance, and lent themselves kindly to the performance. It was not long before the children were scattered to one side, from whence they looked with glittering eyes, the light shining on their ebony faces. The music struck up a monotonous air, and a man and a woman took their places on a cleared spot of ground. They moved slowly at

first, with much affectation of dignity and elaborate bowings and courtesies. Soon, however, the music grew livelier, and they began to accentuate their movements with the patting of hands and the tappings of bare heels on the ground. Their haunches twisted, and they sprang higher and higher in the air, advancing upon each other so as to lightly touch their stomachs together and retreating with a backward bound. The music grew louder and faster, and the full enthusiasm of a wild African dance took possession of them. Their movements grew almost frenetic, and the perspiration dripped from their ebony faces. All at once they broke out into a chant, whose measure was accented by the clapping of hands, and in which all the spectators joined. It was an utterly rude melody, but somehow had a fascination in its monotony and its wild, high notes. This was the song, utterly unintelligible at the time, but afterward obtained from one of the performers:

"I went to Long Hall well:
I meet Seeago Day.
I ask her to lend me the bucket—
The bucket to draw little water—
The water to boil little junfy
The junfy to go on me belly.
O, yaw, O, yaw, O yaw,
Knock me kenaw—
O, yaw, knock me kenaw
Come in, yaw,
Den me knock your kenaw."

"Junfy" signifies the Indian meal with which the plantation negroes were fed in the slave days, and to "knock me kenaw" was an invitation to touch stomachs together, which was so frequent a movement in the dance. There were a number of other verses to the chant equally meaningless, and the mere development of some current phrase in the same fashion. Meanwhile the children were not the least amusing part of the spectacle. They were thoroughly infected with the spirit of the music, and all danced and bobbed and jogged together, down to the smallest tot, who could hardly stand on his little brown legs, with indefatigable activity and in perfect time to the music. Their little faces shone with perspiration and delight, their beady eyes glistened, and their teeth glittered in a silent laugh of enjoyment. When the first performers became tired or had danced their time, for they seemed absolutely indefatigable, they were succeeded by others, and sometimes four or six were dancing at a time to apparently the same measure, and if the chant differed in words, its rhythm was the same. One old man with grey hair showed as much activity as the younger ones, and hopped and capered with even greater variety to the palpitations of his heels and the grotesqueness of his movements.

There was absolutely nothing indecent about the dance, nothing but an exhibition of animal good

humor and possession of the spirit of music. It is perhaps very different when a number of negroes are collected together for an orgy, and their spirits are brutalized with new rum. Then, possibly, scenes are exhibited, whose appropriate place would be the kraal of some barbarous tribe in Western Africa. On such occasions the white visitor would not be welcome, and possibly not very safe. But those orgies are becoming very rare, and are only the inheritance of the bad old days of slavery, when the negroes were treated as brutes and acted as such in their few hours of relaxation. Now, although religion and education have still a great deal to do in the West Indies before the negro can be ranked as approaching a European standard of civilization, they have succeeded in putting down such barbarous exhibitions as used to take place, and which are now extremely rare. As has been said, the younger negroes, especially in the towns, are ignorant of the old plantation dances, and would consider themselves as degrading their standard of gentility by practicing them. The dance which I saw was chiefly an exhibition got up for my benefit and, although genuine in its way, and, when begun, fully entered into by the performers, it was doubtless a somewhat artificial relic of ancient days. In a few years even such an exhibition as that would be impossible in Nevis, as it would be now in many of the islands, and the old

songs and the old dances will be succeeded by "After the Ball," or its successor in popularity, and by the waltz *a trois temps*. At least this will be the case if the islands do not drift backward, instead of moving forward, as many fear, and pure barbarism brush off the veneer of civilization and education, which it now wears. In that case the Obeah man may rule as he does in Hayti over orgies as wild and cannibal as those of the aboriginal Caribs. But it is to be hoped that a better future awaits these fair and lovely island gardens of the sea.

VII.

SAN MARTIN.

THE TOWN OF GREAT BAY AND ITS EXTENSIVE SALT POND—MARIGOTS ONLY FORTRESS—THE FRENCH AND THE DUTCH QUARTER—POISONED FISH—AMERICAN LOAFERS.

Basse Terre, St. Kitts, Feb. 4, 1896.

The island of San Martin, partly Dutch and partly French, is one of the lesser Antilles, lying to the north of St. Kitts. During the salt picking season it is sometimes visited by American and English steamers, but during the greater part of the year the only means of communication is by the small sloops that ply between the various islands. We had a beautiful voyage. We left the roadstead of St. Kitts about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, and skirted along the green and glowing shores, with their fringe of palm trees and their sugar plantations stretching up to the sides of the mountains, whose tops were veiled in white and shifting clouds. The fresh breeze blew and the turquoise sea sparkled in light. As we

passed out into the channel between St. Kitts and St. Eustatius, the boat heeled over to the breeze until the water foamed over the lee rail and darted through the waters like a flying fish. Now and then a drizzle of rain would drop from some fleecy cloud apparently not bigger than a pocket handkerchief, and add a freshness to the spicy air. At dusk we were off the beach of Orangetown, in St. Eustatius, where some bags of mail were dumped on board amid the usual shouting and guffawing of the negro boatmen. Then began the magic of a night voyage in the tropics. The golden twilight faded into the darker beauty of the night lit by the great brilliant stars, with a horned moon of silver purity hanging in the sky. The breeze sang and the waters hissed and gurgled in our swift course. The helmsman sat flat upon the deck and pulled the tiller with a skill and ease that never missed a point of the course, and a silent sailor trimmed the sheet as every now and then the helmsman uttered some guttural interjection. The rest of the crew were stretched about the deck, flat upon their faces, sleeping profoundly, or occasionally rising to light one of the long native cigars at the glowing brazier and smoke in silence. Hour after hour glided on, and there was absolutely no temptation to leave the magic scene for the hard bunk below, even though it had been thoughtfully garnished with a clean sail as a luxury for the sybaritic

traveller. At 10 o'clock we dropped anchor in the harbor of Great Bay, surrounded with dark hills, and with the red light on the pier head shining in the darkness. Boatmen were awaiting the arrival of the sloop, and the kindly landlady of the only lodging-house on the island was aroused to admit us to clean and sweet repose.

The town of Great Bay in the Dutch part of San Martin lies between the harbor and an extensive salt pond in the rear, which creates the industry of the island, and makes it more prosperous than its decayed and impoverished neighbor. During the three dry months in the year it is a scene of great activity, the women trooping in from the country to pick the salt, and the bagging, grinding and storing giving employment to the resident population. Now, however, the ponds were simply a flat sheet of whitish water crossed with slender lines of dams and dykes, and only the piles of weather stained salt on the shore showed their product. The warehouses and shops along the principal street were of a more substantial character than in most of the small West India islands, and there were signs of a commercial prosperity very grateful to witness after the spectacles of poverty and decadence elsewhere. But it was the dull season, and no one seemed to have anything particular to do beyond the usual avocation of a West Indian town. From early

morning the streets were filled with negro women with baskets of fruit, vegetables and fish on their heads looking for purchasers or standing in noisy gossip with each other. The negro boatmen lounged about the pier or smoked their long cigars in the shade of the little wooden custom-house. The uniformed policemen sat on benches under the shade of the trees in the court-house yard, and the idea that their guardianship could possibly be required seemed absurd.

The events of the day were hardly more important than the watching of flies upon the wall. One morning there was a bustle on the wharf, and a poor creature was lifted out of a boat and taken, feebly moaning, in a litter made of a fishing net, to the hospital. He was suffering from eating poisoned fish, and died a few hours afterward. He had eaten of the barracouta, a fish which is ordinarily wholesome, but which, from some unknown cause, sometimes becomes poisonous, producing a dimness of vision and a loss of hearing, accompanied by a painful itching, even when not fatal as in this case. Some attribute the poison to its frequenting a copper bank in the waters off St. Eustatius, and others to its feeding upon some noxious sea plant, but under all circumstances it is to be regarded with suspicion. The poor fellow, who died, had been stupidly quarantined for twenty-four hours on a sloop flying the yellow

flag in the harbor, whereas, if he had been promptly brought on shore and given medical attendance, he might have recovered. The quarantine regulations between the West India islands of various nationalities are sometimes very capricious and arbitrary, and the traveller who has come with a clean bill of health from some neighboring port may find himself compelled to roast for days in the harbor under the yellow flag from some causeless alarm of the medical authorities, although, perhaps, an excess of precaution is not to be condemned, when Yellow Jack is liable to make his appearance at any time, as recently at Antigua and Martinique.

Among the wanderers in the streets of Great Bay were a couple of Americans, shabby and disreputable types of the shiftless adventurers who are occasionally to be found wandering about these islands, the plague of the consuls and a nuisance to the people. They were not long in introducing themselves with tales of distress, which had the familiar accent of the importunate street loafer. They had been in Guadaloupe, they said, working about the machinery of some sugar factory, although their certificates of engineers would probably not entitle them to rank above the grade of firemen. They had come to San Martin by the charity of the captain of some schooner, or been shipped off by the consul in order to get rid of them, and were living on the half-contempt-

uous charity of the colored people, who were, perhaps, glad to find white loafers at their own level, with whom they could be familiar. As usual, they wanted the assistance of the consul to get somewhere else, where they would be equally idle and equally useless, and in the meantime would be grateful for a little money to buy food with, which, being interpreted, meant rum. It is to be said for the West India islands as a resort for tramps, that here, at least, they are not run in by the police or made to saw wood for their lodgings in the station-houses; they are not in danger of suffering from the cold, and the negroes will readily give them of their fish and yams. But to receive the charity of a race, who are accustomed to regard the white man as a superior being, must be a trial to all but the most indurated callousness, and they can only get from one island prison to another by making themselves a nuisance to somewhat unsympathizing consuls. Altogether there are not many of the class who have the spirit of adventure to wander so far, and the West Indies are not likely to become an American tramps' paradise in spite of their advantages for laziness.

The French part of the island of San Martin is called Marigot. There are two ways thither from Great Bay, one by land and one by water. The route by land is over hills and down valleys, and the road is generally in such a condition as to be nearly im-

passable to carriages from unmended washouts. A ride on horseback in a broiling sun presented few attractions, in spite of the charms of the mountain scenery, and the choice was given to a row-boat. Two of the splendid boatmen of the islands, brawny, supple and untiring, took the oars, and the traveller ensconced himself in the stern under an umbrella. The way led past the projecting point, which protects the harbor on the west, and which has at its extremity the maritime signal station. Above it rose a lofty hill, crowned with the crumbling grey stone walls of an ancient fortress, dating back to the days when every one of these islands was a coveted prey to the warring European nations, and a hostile fleet might be expected any day in the harbor with designs of plunder or conquest. Now their sole garrisons are the lizards, and the fierce tropical vegetation is disjointing and uprooting the strong and solid masonry of the bastions and walls.

It was a new sensation to be pulled along the edge of the rolling surf that was boiling up the red rocks in white foam, and to feel the power of the sea wrestle with the strong arms of the boatmen. But their muscles were of steel, and their power was as sure as the machinery of a steamboat. Point after point we passed with the angry teeth of sunken rocks jutting up into the sea and spluttering with foam, until finally we reached the mouth of a lagoon that

opened suddenly in the shore. Here was a new feature in tropical journeying. The water was absolutely calm and waveless between the sheltering shores.

The hue had changed to a beautiful emerald green, and, at times, was almost white in the shallows, so clear and pellucid was it. Everything could be seen on the bottom at the depth of several feet, strange forms of marine plants, with colors as brilliant as those of orchids, queerly shaped fish darting away in alarm at the splash of the oars, and medusæ and mollusks of all forms and colors. It was a natural aquarium of infinite variety and beauty. Once we came upon a huge turtle, several feet in diameter, slowly crawling to some undisturbed retreat, and which the boatmen regarded with eager and covetous eyes. Now the lagoon narrowed to a strait and now broadened to a wide lake. From behind a wooded islet would appear a rude native boat, filled with a chattering crew of men and women, who would pause and stare curiously at the stranger, and here and there a solitary fisherman would be seen pulling up his wicker traps. On the shore were ruins of ancient houses amid abandoned plantations, and one or two white wooden residences, embowered in greenery, whose owners were stock-farmers, the sugar industry being entirely abandoned. Negro huts, thatched with palm, nestled among the trees, and the smoke of their cooking fires

rose straight in the tranquil air. The sharp rays of the sun pierced the umbrella like a sieve, and sparkled on the water with blinding intensity.

At length, after a couple of hours of untiring row, the lagoon narrowed to a pocket. Rows of huts appeared along the shore, and beyond them the roofs of more substantial houses. We had taken Marigot in the rear. The town is hardly more than a single wide street, with warehouses that showed signs of former prosperity, and ending or beginning at a single wharf. The harbor is a beautiful one, encircled on one side by a long thin line of projecting beach, with a row of feathery palms silhouetted against the sky and its white sand sparkling in the sun. The atmosphere of the place was decidedly French, the French of the shores of the Mediterranean, and, except for the color of the people, might have been taken for a fishing village on the Marseilles coast. The population was noisy and animated to an extraordinary degree, gesticulating and jabbering in a Creole patois, and the women wore gayer turbans and more variegated garments than the soberer inhabitants of the Dutch division of the island. An attempt to take a photograph of a picturesque group of market women on the wharf produced a collision with the authorities. A gendarme rushed up with the information that such an operation was "defendu," and it was only after a visit to the mayor

that license was given to perpetuate the features of the negro women on a gelatine plate. It is to be supposed that prohibition to take plans of the French fortifications on the German frontier has been extended to a general ordinance for the colonies, but the only fortress in Marigot is a stone ruin on the hill commanding the town, whose rusty cannons are sunk in the ground, and whose crumbling barracks are inhabited by a negro family, whose washing was drying on the ramparts. No nation would probably take Marigot as a gift, but the gendarme was doubtless proud of having performed his full duty in preserving the mystery of its defences.

In the harbor was a small schooner taking a party of laborers to San Domingo, where some recent exploitations by American capitalists have given the promise of work to these unoccupied people. Her deck was swarming with men, whose only baggage apparently was the clothes they stood in, and whose natural gaiety was stimulated by numerous farewell glasses of rum. They were shouting and whooping and dancing on the narrow deck of the vessel, and around it were the boats containing the wives and sweethearts, who were apparently equally happy at the departure of the men and the prospect of their return with a portion of their wages. The whole scene had more the air of a picnic or a pleasure excursion than an emigration, although many of the

men will probably leave their bones in the forests of San Domingo, and the date of the return of any of them was very problematical. But the negro has very little idea of the perils of the future, and the French negro seems to be even more light-hearted and careless than those of the English islands. At any rate the women are likely to be quite as well off without their alleged supporters as with them, for they do the most of the work, and their affections are not very deeply engaged in their more or less temporary union. Finally the schooner slowly hoisted her sails and bore out of the harbor with the freshening breeze, the noise of the shouting passengers being lost in the distance, and the boats returned to the shore without, so far as could be seen, a single disconsolate countenance among the deserted women.

The attractions and curiosities of Marigot were not many. The drinking-shops had somewhat the air of shabby French cabarets in the noisiness of their customers, and there was a distinct local color about the place, which showed a change in the nationality from the Dutch quarter. But otherwise it was a West Indian town, with all the familiar features and no new ones. An enthusiastic Frenchman stopped the visitor to express his admiration for the United States and his warm desire that it should take possession of the West India islands, but his enthusiasm was apparently in some measure due to

absinthe. At least no permanent arrangements were made between the two for the transfer, and Marigot is likely to remain for some time in possession of the French Republic unless she turns it over to the people themselves. On our way home it had become dusk when we reached the open sea. The current was strong and the wind ahead. An occasional wave spurted its spray into the face, and the gusty night uttered warning voices. A dark cloud gathered over the mountain, and suddenly a rain squall swept down upon the sea. Crouching behind the umbrella was not much protection against the driving drops, and an inch or so of water invaded the feet. It was with a decided sense of relief that the wharf was gained, and the drenched boatmen shifted their oars out of their rowlocks. They seemed to mind the shower no more than water-rats, and merely shook themselves like dogs to scatter the water from their drenched garments. The effeminate traveller hastened to get into dry garments and take a preventive against the fever.

VIII.

ST. BARTS.

ABANDONED PINEAPPLE PLANTATIONS—DREAM OF TRANQUIL BEAUTY IN AN AMPHITHEATRE OF HILLS—A WEDDING—TYPE OF A BUCCANEER—THE STORY OF A CRIME—A WEST INDIAN EVENING.

Basse Terre, St. Kitts, Feb. 10, 1896.

I was fortunate enough to find a conveyance from San Martin to the French island of St. Bartholemew, otherwise known as St. Barts, in a more comfortable vessel than the ordinary country sloops. The captain of the schooner, the Maid of the Mist, sixty tons burden, which conveys salt from San Martin to the neighboring islands, and sometimes runs up as far as Florida, agreed to go a little out of his course and land me at St. Barts. The schooner is a staunch one, very strongly built, as she needs be to stand the tempestuous weather of the hurricane season, and stood up stiffly in the strong breeze. I think the captain was a little disappointed in his bargain, for it was a dead beat to windward all the way. St. Barts is in plain sight of San Martin, looming hilly

and dark, with outlying sentinels of lofty rocks standing out in the sea, while still farther to the north lay the low, flat island of Anguilla. The schooner made long stretches out to sea, and then it was "'bout ship" and "hard-a-lee," and she would spin around like a top, with fluttering sails, for another stretch in the opposite course. Slowly, very slowly, we made our way toward the island, whose features gradually grew more distinct. Night fell, lit by a glorious moon, and we were still outside the outer sentinels of rocks. It was not until nearly 10 o'clock that the schooner made her last short tack in the narrow harbor and the anchor tore out the rattling chain. There was a wandering light on the shore, and voices hailed us. There was much shouting in a vain attempt to get the harbor-master to come off and permit the solitary passenger to land, and at one time it looked as though the schooner would have to remain until morning before the ban could be removed. Finally, however, the captain lowered his boat and went off to a French man-of-war lying in the harbor, where he found a medical officer to approve his bill of health, and I was put on shore. Instead of the usual crowd of porters there was but a solitary girl waiting to receive me. She threw the strap of my bag around her neck, grasped my camera case and led the way over the uneven flags with which the town is paved to the solitary lodging-

house of the island, to which, after some delay and fluttering of lights, I was admitted and made welcome with cordial friendliness.

St. Barts lies on both sides of a long and narrow bay or lagoon called the "Gros Goulot," which forms a safe retreat for the sloops during the hurricane season, and where they lie with their anchors down and their masts taken out until it is safe to resume their trade again. The principal street lies under the lee of a lofty and steep ridge, covered with vegetation and along whose top are to be seen the stone ruins of ancient residences. There are some good houses still remaining, although unpainted and dingy, and large warehouses, showing the ancient trade. But the iron shutters have been long put up and grown rusty, and the only business now done is in a few small shops clustered about the landing-place. Time was when St. Barts was a famous place for pineapples, and as many as 20 and 30 American schooners have been seen in the harbor at a time loading with the fruit. But that has long gone by; the pineapple plantations have been abandoned, and there is no trade from the island except a few goats and sheep, turtles, palm hats and such driblets of produce as are exported to the neighboring islands. It is a wonder how the people live. Everything is very cheap, to be sure, but it requires a little money to buy even the cheapest of necessaries,

and it is impossible to see where it comes from. There is no market place, and the men and women go wandering about with baskets of fish and vegetables, and pass from kitchen to kitchen without apparently diminishing their stock. There are many beggars in St. Barts, not the impudent urchins and brazen women of the other islands, who salute every well-dressed stranger with the demand "Me beg you a penny," but cases of real want and hunger, where the few sous are wanting to buy a fish or a yam. Poor women will seat themselves at your door in silence and with only a despairing gesture of the hand demand the alms which the hardest heart cannot refuse, or some forlorn old creature will hobble into your room and pitifully tell you that she will not have a mouthful that day unless you give her the means to get it. Tiny little children are taught to ask for alms. One beautiful little creature with only a shirt to cover his chubby form came painfully toiling up the steps on his tottering little legs. He could not speak, but he held out his hand for a sou, and pulled off his little cap in thanks when he got it. The spectacle of the poverty of the respectable classes was hardly less painful—the worn and faded furniture of their houses, their poor but decent garments, and the appearance of life upon the threadbare edge of existence. There was apparently more poverty in St. Barts than in any of

the islands I have visited, and a deeper and more hopeless decay from ancient prosperity. Not that the aspect of the place is gloomy by any means. The sun is bright; the sea is blue; the trees and vegetation are fresh and green; the negroes are gay with the unfailing cheerfulness of the tropics, and raggedness and poverty have not the distressful air of colder and less hospitable climes. For most, indeed, there is food in plenty, and the other necessities of life elsewhere are here superfluities. Children swarm everywhere, and there is not the slightest evidence that there will be any diminution in the population because there is nothing to do.

There is a beautiful walk in St. Barts climbing the high hill, which has the fort on its summit. There on a narrow plateau are the ancient buildings still maintained in repair and inhabited, not by soldiers, but by an ancient functionary and his numerous family. The esplanade is swept clean, and the ancient cannons are still in their places, while the flag-staff shows that the place is still a fortress of France, if it could hardly be defended against an invasion of goats. As a matter of fact, the garrison of St. Barts consists of three gendarmes, the army of five having been reduced by various casualties to that number. From the fort there is a most beautiful view, the long harbor lying at your feet, and across the opposite shore with its houses and ruins basking in the sun-

shine. Beyond them lies the sweeping circle of the blue sea and the wide horizon of the fleecy sky. From the fort out into the country the road winds under a lofty hill, which affords a grateful shade against the climbing sun. Men are met coming in with burdens who give a smiling "bon jour," and neatly clad little children are making their way to the school in the town. Suddenly winding round a turn in the road you come upon a scene which is absolutely one of the most charming in its tranquil beauty in all the West Indies. It is an amphitheatre of lovely hills surrounding a tract of level land, most beautifully green, soft and enchanting. There are two houses of ancient plantations to give a human aspect to the scene, and in the centre rises a tall and beautiful palm to accentuate the tropic aspect. Beyond are the blue waters of an inlet of the sea sleeping under the shadow of the farther hill. The picture makes a dream of tranquil beauty. Reluctantly turning we follow the road, which winds under the fort. It skirts the waters of a still lagoon, and is bordered by rows of the deadly manchineel tree, whose gray stems and luxuriant foliage give no token of the maleficence which is sometimes betrayed by nature as well as by animal and man. Upon the border of the open sea the surf is rolling lazily in, and

"Beauty born of murmuring sound"

envelops the scene.

Among the incidents at St. Barts was the wedding of a country couple. The civil ceremony previous to that in the church took place at the Mairie, a large building, much too extensive for the restricted functions of the government. At 9 o'clock the bridal procession was seen advancing up the street. There are no carriages in St. Barts, and the marriage party had perforce to walk. No one knows how many miles they had been compelled to traverse, but their costumes were neat and clean and their faces fresh. The procession was headed by the bride and groom under black umbrellas, she in white with a white veil and orange blossoms, and he in correct black, and the cortege of a dozen or more were dressed in a manner to do credit to the taste of the country people. The ceremony took place in a lofty room adorned with the image of the French Republic in the shape of a tiaral female figure in white plaster. The mayor, adorned with his scarf, sat at the head of the table around which the bridal party were seated, while his secretary read the long formularies of the French law, including the attested consent of the parents of the contracting parties, and then pronounced them duly married. There was no kissing or embracing or effusion of feeling of any kind, and the ceremony was as coldly formal and constrained as possible. Some young women of the town and some nurses with children had gathered to witness the

spectacle, but otherwise it might have been the signature of a last will and testament instead of a wedding. From the Mairie the party took their way to the Roman Catholic church at the other end of the town, where the religious ceremony was performed, and from thence to their homes, where the wedding festivities doubtless broke up the solemn constraint of the official ceremonies. The country population of St. Barts is almost exclusively of French descent and Roman Catholic, although the island was for a number of years in the possession of Sweden.

The island, it seems, was the private property of Marshal Bernadotte, and when he became king of Sweden it passed to the ownership of the crown. About seventeen years ago it was retroceded to France by vote of the people, largely under the influence of the Roman Catholic priesthood. The more intelligent people of the town appear to regret the change, and to regard the rule of Sweden as more kindly and generous than that of France. The island is now simply a commune of Guadaloupe, with no resident governor and no independent representation in the Chamber of Deputies. A Swedish man-of-war had been recently in the harbor, and her visit was the occasion of many rejoicings, including a grand ball, in which, doubtless, much ancient finery was furbished up to adorn the younger generation.

The French man-of-war, on the contrary, was quite coldly received, and the only festivities it occasioned were the carousing of its drunken sailors on shore.

Once in a while in the West Indies, as in other parts of the world, one comes across survivals of ancient types, which recall epochs and methods of life which have long since passed away, and which show how persistent is a strong strain of blood. The buccaneers and pirates have long since vanished from the Spanish Main, and the majority of the inhabitants of the islands are as peaceful and commonplace in their appearance as in their avocations. But in St. Barts there was a man, a stranger, who had wandered there by some chance, who presented the perfect image of the pirate chief, who commanded the long, black schooner which swept suddenly out of some lagoon to pounce on the unsuspecting merchantman. He was tall and dark, with a handsome countenance and a full black beard. But there was that in his keen eye, and the free and daring grace of his movements, and the expression of his countenance, not so much cruel as pitiless, if the fine distinction may be drawn, which suggested at once that he would be at home on the deck of a vessel whose crew were governed with the pistol shot, and whose regard for a trading craft would be that of a tiger for its prey. He may have been the most peaceful and harmless man in the world, and

engaged in no more unlawful occupation than in trading for yams and buying goats, but if he is not a descendant in right line and full instinct from some pirate chief, then there is no faith in the laws of physiognomy and the perpetuation of characteristics. St. Barts, like the neighboring islands of Saba and St. Eustatius, was the haunt of pirates in their day, and one of their latest representatives, Captain Tom Rowley, was hung on the Point as late as the beginning of the present century.

It was my privilege to spend the last evening of my visit at St. Johns, the beautiful valley that had so charmed me with the spectacle by day. Seated on the broad stone verandah of one of the houses, representing one of the two estates into which the valley is divided, one looked over the broad, level field lit by the light of the full moon, and clothed in a faint white mist. Cattle were feeding here and there or lay recumbent on the sward. The waters of the lagoon sparkled in the distance, and the palm tree softly waved its feathery head. The various insect voices of the tropic night filled the air, and the scene and atmosphere were of exquisite beauty and romance. The hours were spent in the warm and cordial friendliness of West Indian hospitality, which welcomes the rare stranger with a fresh stock of news and ideas, as if, to borrow the expression of the chief justice of the Leeward

Islands, "he was the angel Gabriel come to gossip," and makes one feel that one is conferring a favor as well as receiving one. That night was marked with a white stone in my West Indian wanderings.

IX.

RIOTING IN ST. KITTS.

SUGAR BUILDINGS DESTROYED BY FIRES SET BY NEGRO MOBS — CANE FIELDS DESTROYED ALL OVER THE ISLAND — MAGISTRATES IMBECILE AND THE POLICE FORCE PRACTICALLY HELPLESS.

Basse Terre, St. Kitts, February 18, 1896.

St. Kitts has had its little excitement, which, though comparatively trifling in its results thus far, shows what volcanic forces lie under these fair and beautiful islands, of a different nature from those which first thrust them up from the bottom of the sea. It came in the shape of labor disturbances on the plantations, followed by a riot in the town of Basse Terre. For more than a week the sky has been illuminated by the light of burning cane fields, set on fire by the negroes in revenge for their failure to obtain an increase of wages. The incendiarism began on the plantations of a Portuguese proprietor, who is not popular on account of his miserly disposition, and was regarded as simply an act of isolated revenge. But the contagion spread so that in all parts of the island cane fields just ready for the harvest were ruined. Still the government authorities acted very supinely, merely offering a trifling

reward for the apprehension of the incendiaries, instead of arresting a dozen or twenty of the noisiest of the ringleaders and putting them in jail, which would probably have quelled the disturbance. For some nights the fires were not accompanied by any disturbances, but becoming emboldened by impunity and excited by communion in idleness, the negroes broke out into violence on Sunday night at a plantation called Stone Fort, some six or eight miles from town on the leeward side of the island. Various startling stories were brought into town in the early morning about men being killed and the plantation house in a state of siege. I took a carriage and drove out. It was a lovely morning, and all nature smiled as if there were no such thing as the angry passions of men to vex her calm. The surf rolled in with its long, low roar, and the mountain and fields were sparkling in the warm sunshine. We met the usual wayfarers on the road, men and women walking into town with burdens on their heads, carts loaded with cane for the boiling-houses, and a stray horseman or two. Washerwomen were standing middle deep in the stream pounding unfortunate garments on the rocks, and the children about the cabin doors were as noisy and frolicsome as usual. It was not until we arrived at the village of Old Road that there were signs of any unusual event in the air. The street was filled with a noisy and ges-

ticulating mob, which crowded in and out of the rum shops, and was evidently in a very considerable state of excitement. They yelled and jeered at me as my carriage passed through them, not with any apparent ferocity or ill-will, but in simple bravado and insolence. The only sign of violence was when a burly and brutal negro made a heavy blow upon the side of the carriage with a club, but it was not intended to do me any harm. At length, after various wanderings and blunderings in which I paid unexpected visits to several disturbed proprietors, we found the place. The yard around the boiling-house, which was paved with megass, or the refuse of the cane, was crowded with a thick throng of negroes, men, women and children, some two or three hundred in number. They were not savage, although excited in demeanor, and made way readily enough for the carriage. Among them were a dozen or so of the black policemen from town, who were exercising no sort of restraint upon the noise and gesticulation, and were apparently friendly spectators rather than otherwise. The plantation house was on the summit of a steep hill, and was reached by a long flight of stone steps after the climb. It overlooked the broad fields of the plantation, which the day before had been waving with ripe cane ready for the harvest, but were now withered and blackened with the devastating fires of the night. The manager, a gallant

young fellow, crawled painfully into the room in his pajamas to meet me. He had been severely bruised in the leg with a stone while standing guard at the boiler-house, and been compelled to fire his revolver at his assailants, of whom he had wounded two. He described it as rather a "nasty night." The maddened mob, after setting fire to the cane, had paraded up and down the road below the house with waving torches and drums beating and with wild yells and songs. Some spark of barbaric ferocity in a brain inflamed with rum might easily have led the men to sack and burn the house, and the occupants might have considered themselves fortunate if they had escaped with their lives. Nevertheless the brave wife was as cheerful and hospitable as if she had not passed through a night of terror, and the little children played about quite unconscious of the anxious eyes which had watched their sleep. The family seemed to be a little reassured by the presence of the police, although to me they seemed but a feeble dependence, and hoped that the worst was passed. But after my return to town violence broke out again. The overseer had his arm broken by a stone and was driven into his house, from whence they refused to allow him to be carried or for a doctor to approach him. To close the episode of Stone Fort, a detachment of sailors from a British man-of-war in the harbor, was sent on the little

steamer Greenwood, to Old Road, where they landed, and stood guard over the plantation until morning. The mob with a wholesome respect refrained from anything but noise, and therefore lived to make a noise another night.

Meanwhile, what of the town. The first sign of excitement was the appearance of a gang of field laborers, men and women, parading the streets with drums and tambourines, and followed by the usual crowd of dancing and jumping urchins. But as the afternoon wore on affairs began to assume a more serious aspect. The boatmen of the harbors had gone out on strike. They had hauled their boats up on the beach, and declared that they would not and that no one else could land passengers from the steamers until the rate of fare had been officially doubled. By the most culpable negligence on the part of the authorities the rum shops had been allowed to remain open, and the mob grew more savage and noisy every hour. The sound of the conch shells blown with barbarous dissonance grew louder and more frequent, and almost the entire negro population was under the influence of strong excitement. The long jetty was crowded from end to end with a yelling crowd, and when some passengers from the steamer Tyne were landed in the steamer's boat they were jostled and insulted, and a negro or two had to be knocked down before they

would give way. There was every sign of an approaching riot to come with the night, but still the supreme authorities neglected to call for a force of marines from a man-of-war in the harbor, and allowed things to take their course. When night darkened down the street lamps were lit and there the rioters assembled. They were not in large parties and had apparently no common purpose or plan. Their first act, as was natural, was to smash the street lamps, and soon there was a sound of splintering glass all over the town, and the gutters were running with fire from the burning oil. When an attempt was made to put these out with water and earth the stones began to fly and then the house had to transform itself into a state of siege. The wooden shutters were closed to, the windows and the door to the court-yard barred. The solitary man in the house stood guard with his revolver at the gate without feeling that he was doing anything particularly valiant, while the boys enjoyed the excitement and the women flitted about in a state of more or less anxiety and alarm. There would be an interval of silence, and then along would come a roaring mob, with drums beating, and the heavy stones would strike in a shower upon the windows and door, and then pass on. There was no knowing, of course, when they might resort to actual assault, with plunder, or still worse, to fire. Meanwhile the bright

flashlight of the man-of-war began to wander over the town and shoot bright bars up into the sky. It was evident relief was coming. In fact, after the mob had had practical possession of the town for more than an hour a party of twenty-six marines were landed. But the mob, which had already looted two or three rum shops, had become savage and foolhardy, and were not at once to be intimidated by so small a party. Fortunately, they did not gather together in one mass, or they might have overwhelmed them, but they charged then several times in small parties, and were received with the butt ends of the rifles on their hard heads, which drove them back and scattered them. It was an illustration of the refrain of Rudyard Kipling's song :

"Oh, my, don't you come anigh,
When Tommy is a workin' with the bayonet and the butt."

Meanwhile the marines were swearing mad at not being allowed to fire at the blankety blank beggars who were pelting them with stones from around the corners and running away in the darkness. The riot act had not been read in due form, and the timid or imbecile magistrate refused to do so. The marines swore they were risking their lives for the people of St. Kitts, who refused to allow them to defend themselves, but nevertheless they marched steadily about the streets, dispersing every group as it gathered,

and taking their peltings with profane philosophy.

Finally, at about 11 o'clock, the dreaded cry of fire was raised, and the cracked old town bell began to tinkle its alarm. Wails and shrieks and fiercer cries were heard, and it seemed as though the crisis had actually arrived. But, fortunately, the fire was not in a densely settled part of the town, and was in only a flimsy building. The fire was soon extinguished by the vigorous exertions of the fire-brigade, aided by volunteers. The negroes attempted to interfere, and once cut the hose, but it was replaced, and a few streams from the nozzles full in their faces dampened their ardor. There were two or three narrow escapes from serious fires during the night. On one occasion the mob, in plundering a rum shop, had dropped the lamp on the floor, but, fortunately, it did not break, and was pitched out into the street by School Superintendent Watkins, who distinguished himself by his coolness and bravery during the night. There were other instances of pluck and presence of mind among the people, but, as a whole, the riot found them unprepared and without concert of action, and it is not too much to say that but for the presence of the small body of disciplined marines from the man-of-war, the town of Basse Terre would have been sacked and burned. The magistrates were imbecile, and the police force practically helpless, even if its fidelity could have

been depended upon, which was by no means certain, as they were all black and recruited from the people among whom they lived. As the night wore on, shots began to be heard, first a volley as a warning that the guns were not altogether to be used as clubs, and then more serious business, which killed and wounded a number of the negroes. Marauders were caught attempting to break into houses and summarily shot, without benefit of the riot act, and others were lugged off to the jail, which was soon overflowing. But, as a whole, after midnight the noisy mob had dispersed and its members had crawled into their cabins to nurse their broken heads and sleep off the effects of their orgies on stolen liquors, to appear in the morning with as innocent faces as they could assume, but keeping an eye out all the time for the apprehended approach of a policeman.

Meanwhile the people of St. Kitts have got something more serious to talk about than their ordinary parochial gossip of Little Peddington. The boats are still drawn up on the beach and the sullen boatmen refuse to pull an oar. An American steamer which arrived last night had to lower her own boats in order to take the mails and passengers on shore. There were no more plantation fires last night, but there is no knowing how soon they may begin again, and prevention is practically impossible. It is not

likely that the mob will break out again so long as the marines are here, but the man-of-war cannot remain a permanent station in the harbor, and when she is gone the mob has learned its strength and opportunity. As a matter of fact, the island makes too paltry a return to Great Britan for her to maintain a garrison here, and the white people can only depend on themselves for defence. This means the raising of a volunteer force, which would doubtless be effectual for a time, but the worst of it is that all these disturbances and the evidence of the unreliable character of the people will tend to hasten the decay of the island, cripple its industry and lead to the gradual depopulation of the whites. Then the negro will have things his own way, accentuating his accession to power with arson and murder or not, as it may happen. These are the spectres which rise before the people of St. Kitts to-day as they discuss the events of last night with more or less wisdom, and with the usual stern decision which avenges any little unreadiness when the events were actually transpiring. We may wish them a safe deliverance from their troubles without having too much confidence in their wisdom in the drift of circumstances. At all events, something has really happened in St. Kitts since the great cloudburst on Mount Misery which swept away half the town some twenty years ago.

X.

MONTSERRAT.

THE TOWN OF PLYMOUTH AND ITS ABANDONED PLANTATIONS—A RIDE TO WINDWARD—EVENING SCENES ON THE ISLAND — THE ROCK OF REDONDA AND ITS TRAGEDY—IN THE GOLDEN TWILIGHT.

Basse Terre, St. Kitts, March 4, 1896.

There is a little steamer called the Tyne, which performs the mail and passenger service between the Leeward Islands under a subsidy from the government. Even with that the steamer does not pay, so slight is the amount of travel and traffic, and there is talk of taking her off at the expiration of her contract, when the service will be reduced to sailing vessels, and perhaps in due course of time to pirogues, if the islands continue to pursue the progress of decay. At any rate, however, the Tyne affords a more comfortable way of getting about than by the country sloops and schooners, which may be a couple of days banging about the distance of thirty or forty miles that separate the islands, to say nothing of the fact that during the hurricane months they are laid

up in some inlet with four anchors down and their spars taken out. The Tyne is a stout, dumpy little boat, with a terrible propensity to roll, and on the long swells she dips and balances with never-ending oscillation. Nevertheless, she ploughs a strong and rapid way, and after an hour or two's rest in the picturesque harbor of Antigua, nightfall finds her skirting the shores of Montserrat. The hills darkly outlined against the moonlit sky are notched like the teeth of a saw, and stretch along for miles and miles in sharp and jagged peaks. Here and there a light twinkles from the bosky gloom, showing that the inhabitants of some negro cabin are yet awake, but the shores are too far off for the voices of the night to reach us. At length we come to a group of buildings nestling by the water side, and the red flare of a lantern at the end of a wharf. Boats surround the steamer in a flock, and after the usual noise and gabbling of the boatmen we were landed in the town of Plymouth, where a policeman takes our names as if we were suspects. There is a walk over the uneven flags of the narrow streets, across a bridge, which spans a dry river bed, and around a winding road flanked by rustling cane fields, and we are at a hospitable cottage on Cocoanut Hill, where the calm voices of the palm leaves stirring in the gentle breeze and the monotonous chirping of the tree frogs send us to a tranquil sleep.

Although all these West India islands have many features in common in their general configuration as well as in their vegetation and atmosphere, there is yet something distinct about each one of them, which gives it a peculiar flavor of its own. And this not only when the islands are inhabited by different nationalities, but by the same people with the same habits and occupations in life. Some accident in the foundation of a colony perpetuating the characteristics of some locality or province in the mother country may survive in the architecture or the ways of the people, although the tradition of the origin may have entirely disappeared. It is so in the town of Plymouth. Instead of the broad and wide roadways, and free beaches of many West Indian towns, the streets are narrow and tortuous, and the houses are huddled together upon the shore like some ancient English or Irish sea-port town. There are narrow courts and no thoroughfares, massive buildings of decayed solidity that block the way, and strange surprises in the way of back shops and saloons like an ancient European town in miniature. In fact, in spite of the vegetation, the hot sun and the color of the people, there are times when for a fleeting instant the visitor has an idea that he is in some secluded part of the town of Galway, so strongly do the shapes of the buildings recall the aspect of that place. There is a stone building,

dingily whitewashed, in a nook under the hill, which bears the title of the Royal Victoria Hotel, and on its wall is the inscription in black letters: "This is the house that Jack built," which might be taken to signify either the pride of the founder of the establishment or the fact that it was erected by the contributions of the sailors ashore, who patronized its bar. It is the very type of a sea-port inn, where sailors might carouse away their dollars, and in the old days has doubtless heard many a hoarse chant of

"From Ushant to Scilly it's thirty-five leagues,"

or other deep-sea songs, the banging of the counter with horny fists for more rum, and perhaps witnessed many desperate rows when English Jack found himself in contact with the members of a French or Spanish crew. It is quiet enough now; its court-yard is filled with rubbish; its gallery is empty, and its custom is of the feeblest. There are now no merchant vessels which come to the roadstead of Plymouth for cargoes of sugar and coffee. What little merchandise Montserrat produces is now taken away in steamers for New York, London or Glasgow, who call there occasionally and take on a few puncheons or boxes and sail away again. Montserrat is more prosperous than some of the smaller West Indian islands, having a greater variety of culture, which includes coffee and cacao as well as

sugar, and is especially renowned for its product of lime juice, of which there is a large factory. But like all of them, it is decayed from its ancient wealth. The white population has diminished from 1,500 to about 150, and there are abandoned plantations and closed warehouses there as elsewhere. Most of the cultivation is done by negroes upon shares, so that they are more thrifty and industrious, as well as less turbulent, than in the islands where they are employed by the planters at wages, and there have been no riots and burnings of cane fields as recently in St. Kitts and Nevis. Montserrat may live a little longer than the rest of the Lesser Antilles, but like them it is slowly but surely passing into the hands of the descendants of the Mandingoes and Congos, who were brought from Africa in the slave ships, and who are avenged by seeing the ruin and decay of the descendants of their oppressors. There was an old steward of American ships, fat, grey, and voluble, who used to seat himself on the stringer of the wharf at evening and was very glad to disburden himself of his gossip to a fresh listener. He had returned to Montserrat after many years deep-sea voyaging in American clippers and whale ships, and established a bake-shop as a support for his declining years. He was, however, restless in his stagnation, and declared his purpose to go to the States next year in search of another berth

aboard ship. In the interval of the recital of his adventures he told many things of the ancient glories of Montserrat, the splendors and prodigality of its planters and the high-flying prosperity of the golden age, whose vanishing skirts he had witnessed. It appears that many of the planters of Montserrat were Irish of good Galway families, who perpetuated the habits and traditions of their race in their way of living, and wasted their substance even more prodigally than their compeers in the neighboring islands. They have now entirely disappeared and their solitary descendant, who has a lick of the tar-brush in his complexion, as they say, is now living in poverty in England, without money enough to pay his passage home, while his great estates are in litigation and managed by the attorney in the usual skimping and hand-to-mouth fashion.

There are some beautiful drives in Montserrat, to the northward in sight of the flashing blue plain of the sea and to windward quite through the heart of the island to the opposite coast. The road through the island climbs a succession of steep hills winding around declivities and along the edges of deep ravines in whose beds, hidden by the Irish vegetation, foaming torrents pour in the rainy season. To the right and left on the sides of the hills and in the flat lands between are the plantations of sugar-cane, the dark green groves of the dwarfish lime trees,

and the plants of the coffee and cacao. Here and there arise the tall chimney of the sugar boiling-house or the lime juice factory. Men and women are tramping into town with burdens of fruit or vegetables on their heads, and maybe with a fowl or two under the arm. Almost all are chewing great pieces of sugar-cane with their strong white teeth, and smile a pleasant good morning as they pass. A boy comes along riding well back on the quarter deck of his diminutive donkey, as a sailor would say, and now and then we come upon a heavy wagon drawn by oxen and piled high with sugar-cane. As we are slowly climbing a hill, there is a quick patter of hoofs behind us, and a lithe and bright Quadroon girl dashes by, sitting easily in the saddle of her pony, flashing a smile and a glance of her black eyes upon us, and then disappears under an arching bower of greenery.

"A bird to the right sang 'follow,'
A bird to the left sang 'here.'"

And the soft cooing of the ground dove accented the wind with a plaintive murmur. As we climbed higher and higher the landscape widened around us, and we could overlook the wide stretch of rolling hills. Somehow the scene recalled the mountains of Kerry, except for the tall crowns of the palm trees rising here and there. The configuration of the country

was very similar, and the cabins on the hill-sides with their cane thatch, answered to the equally primitive dwellings of the Irish peasantry. The light was sharper and brighter than that which broods softly over the green hills of Ireland, but on this day there were many chasing clouds that drifted past the sun and threw shadows across the hill-sides like those from an Irish sky. Singularly enough many of the localities bear Irish names, such as Cork Hill, and there is said to be a remnant of degraded mongrel whites living in one corner of the island, more barbarous in their ways and manners than the negroes, who are the descendants of the wild Irish banished to the West Indies by Cromwell. It is even said that in their patois are to be found traces of the original Gaelic. In Barbadoes, where most of the Irish exiles were landed, they are equally degenerate and are known by the opprobrious title of "Red Legs." As we begin to descend the windward side the breeze freshens and blows with delightful vigor and coolness. We pass a police barrack and a little collection of huts called the village of Harris, and descend to the borders of the sea. The difference between the windward and leeward sides of the West Indian islands is strikingly illustrated. On the leeward side the sea was flat and calm and only a long swell was lazily rolling up the beach under the cocoanut trees. Here on the same day the high-curved waves were

rolling in with tempestuous force, sending their white foam splashing up the rocks and along the sandy beach. On the leeward side fishermen were paddling about to their pots or landing easily on the beach, while here the boats were drawn high up on the sand out of the reach of the waves, and landing would have been impossible for the most skillful boatman. It was the force of the trade wind, which blows steadily and strongly in one direction, so that in places exposed to its prevailing sweep the palms and other solitary trees are sensibly bent by its strength. The great leaves of the palms twisted and whirled under its power, and all the dark woods took new life with the breeze. As we commenced to climb the hills on the way, the poor old horse, which was attached to the only buggy for hire which Montserrat can boast, gave out, and the passage home was made by walking up the ascents and sliding down the descents with a blind trust in providence and the breeching, while the driver worked his way by alternately leading the horse by the bridle and welting him with a big switch. Our plight moved the jeers of some women, who were mending the road by the primitive method of bringing earth from a neighboring field in wooden platters on their heads to spread over the macadam, and one stout wench offered to lend us a goat. It was a tedious and sweltering journey, but it earned the supreme luxury of the West

Indies, a bath in a rock reservoir, fed with a limpid living stream of most refreshing coolness.

The evenings at Montserrat are not those of maddening excitement and dissipation. You can stroll through the narrow streets of the town, lit by infrequent oil lamps, the object of the curiosity of the groups of women and children seated on the door steps, and of the men lounging on the corners, but there is no sign of animation except among the drinkers seen through the open doors of the bar rooms, who are jabbering under the influence of new rum. You can extend your walk to the wharf, where a few loungers are enjoying the sea breeze among the sugar hogsheads, and where some familiar wench, emboldened by the night, may salute you with a mocking "Good night, Buddy." Then you may turn and by the dark road under the hill come out upon the beach and follow it as long as you will, listening to the endless murmur of the sea, and looking for the ghost of a sail far off on the lucent horizon—or you may turn to the veranda and in the cool breeze endeavor to interpret the voices of the palms as they talk together in the silence.

Between Montserrat and Nevis rises the singular and solitary rock of Redonda. It is bare and brown, with steeply precipitous sides and utterly devoid of vegetation. There is no harbor and apparently no way of landing except by steps cut in the rock.

Here and there on the precipitious sides is a cabin perched like the nest of a sea bird. A more desolate and forlorn place of residence could hardly be imagined, yet an English gentleman and his wife live there, where he is the manager of a phosphate mine. As we approach in the Tyne a flash of light is seen on the rock near the summit, and it is repeated with quick and constant signallings. It is evidently a heliograph with which the manager is endeavoring to communicate with us for some purpose or other. Perhaps it is an urgent appeal for aid. Some accident may have happened on that solitary rock. The lady may be sick and the husband desparingly flashing his light for assistance. But no one on the Tyne knows anything of the meaning of heliograph signals, and she goes on her way leaving the bright points dancing in the sun so long as they can be seen. There is a recent tragedy connected with Redonda, which saddens the thought in connection with the unheeded appeal. A young English gentleman, the only son of the owner of the mine, visited the island and in cruising about in one of the boats got soaking wet in a tropical shower, the hot sun brought on a fever, and when he landed in St. Kitts he was in a perilous condition. Symptoms of yellow fever manifested themselves, and, after lingering a few days, he died. Within a few hours he was buried and the news flashed under the

sea to his parents. They could not have the consolation of having his body sent home, as he died of a pestilence, and a photograph of his grave, with the wreaths placed on it by kindly, if stranger, hands, is the only memorial they can have of his last resting place. Let us hope that no such tragedy is now happening on the solitary rock of Redonda as we steam away in the golden twilight.

TO MRS. WILLIAMS.

A LOVER'S PAIN.

I've thought if those dumb, heathen gods could breathe,
As shapeless, strengthless, wooden things they stand,
And feel the holy incense round them wreathe,
And see before them offerings of the land;
And know that unto them is worship paid,
From pure hearts kneeling on the verdant sod,
Looking to helplessness for light and aid,
Because by fate they know no higher God,
How their dull hearts must ache with constant pain,
And sense of shame and fear to be flung down,
When all their weakness must one day be plain,
And fire avenge the undeserved crown.
And reading my love's letter, sad and sweet, I sigh,
Knowing that such a helpless wooden God am I.

TAUNTON, March, 1870. A. M. W.

TO C. A. W.

How oft have I in days forever gone
Heard thy pure voice in some old simple song,
With happy sadness and sweet grief prolong
The dear complaint of some fond heart forlorn,
That wept in music from grief's harp-strings drawn ;
While all the joys that to free bliss belong
Bloomed in thy radiant grace, a magic throng,
And love enwrapped thee in its shining morn.
But now, alas, those mournful strains of old
Touch my sad heart with pains it cannot bear ;
Their music breathes the anguish they enfold,
And sorrow sings with each enchanted air,
While gleams the vision of that face so fair,
Those dear brown eyes, that hair of softened gold.

A. M. W.

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